

AN ENGLISH GIRL
FORD MADDOX HUEFFER

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AN ENGLISH GIRL

WORKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR

THE SOUL OF LONDON
THE HEART OF THE COUNTRY
THE SPIRIT OF THE PEOPLE
THE FIFTH QUEEN
PRIVY SEAL

IN COLLABORATION WITH JOSEPH CONRAD

THE INHERITORS
ROMANCE

AN ENGLISH GIRL

A ROMANCE

BY

FORD MADDOX HUEFFER

AUTHOR OF "THE FIFTH QUEEN"

METHUEN & CO.

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TO
FRAU REGIERUNGSRAT
EMMA GOESEN
WHO RETURNED FROM
NEW YORK
MORE THAN A GENERATION AGO
AND HAS SINCE BEATEN
THE AUTHOR
THIRTY-ONE TIMES
OUT OF
THIRTY-TWO GAMES
OF CHESS
THIS
WITH AFFECTION

THE ENGLISH GIRL

PART I

THE AMAZING DEATH

I

THE first thing he said when she came into the room was:

“My father *is* dead,” and the announcement stayed her at the door, her hands falling to her side, open, as if, though a moment before they would have known their place and have lain upon the two shoulders of the man she was to marry, now, so new a creature did this announcement make him seem, that she had, at least for a moment, to hesitate as to whether he could still belong to her. It was under the definite spell of that feeling that she uttered the words:

“Oh dear!”—words that implied more than anything else—“tell me all: tell me the worst!”

And he was so sensitive to her moods that he, too, neither made to take her into his arms nor to utter an endearment.

“I *am* the richest citizen in the world, for what it’s worth,” he said, with a flavour of scorn, as if he were quoting the words of a man for whom he had an infinite contempt.

She sank down upon one of the hard-seated, fine, mahogany chairs before she uttered the word "How—!" But she was unable to furnish any adjective. The situation was beyond her: she could say neither "How tremendous!" "How terrible!" nor yet "How magnificent!"

You may guess at a person's character very efficiently by considering his first abstract remark upon any given happening. Tall, rather dark, with rounded cheeks, hair arranged high on her head, tight-fitting park dress, and a slow, elastic gait, and with her self-control and her clear lines—she was called Eleanor Greville—you could not deny the epithet "fine" to her, or to the room or to the atmosphere that surrounded her. And four days before she would at least have been ready to give as much insight into her personality: she would at least have been able to utter some moralisation if she had heard that overwhelming wealth had fallen to the share of any of her intimates.

But, from the Monday on which the first news of his father's death had been cabled from across the water, she had seemed to be lifted out of contact with her own personality. The death had been denied on Tuesday, re-affirmed on the Wednesday by indignant Transatlantic journalists, and re-denied on the Thursday by vastly more indignant Wall Street authorities, who claimed to have "seen him" the night before. So that she had not known whether it would be necessary for her to face the new position, terrible or beneficent, till that

moment. She had not faced it: neither had he given her any assistance.

He had explained to her that the report of his father's death might be true: it might be just the discovery of a genuine newspaper-writer anxious to provide his journal with the earliest report of a good "story." Or it might be a lie invented by his father's enemies who desired to "bear" his father's interests. Or it might be a lie spread abroad by his father himself. And he had explained to her how it might be made to suit his father's turn to "bear" his own interests. She was not lacking in intelligence sufficient to grasp the idea of such a manœuvre, if she had not an exact knowledge, beforehand, of how it would be worked. She was shut off by the necessity of her life with a father who was called "trying" by most people who knew him—a father whose death, if it might have caused some satisfaction to a world that sent a certain class of learned books out for "review," would certainly not have sent the prices of varied stocks tumbling down all over the world.

For the mere rumour of her lover's father's death—the rumour thus unconfirmed, denied, re-affirmed and re-denied with violent asseverations—had undoubtedly effected that. She knew it from her Cousin Augustus, who, a solicitor with a too-limited capital, had, upon the very Monday night, dashed down from town to get from her, with cousinly force, some sort of what he called "pointer." Things, he said, were "falling" all over the place: they went down in London and they went down in Yokohama. As for

what things were doing in the continent that lies westward, between London and Yokohama, he said the report of it beggared description. It had given to her belief in human nature one severe shaking at least. Her Aunt Emmeline, a lady of fifty-two, dessicated and thin-lipped, who more than any of the family had been able to indicate by dogged silence a disapproval of her engagement to "an American"—though to be sure you could not possibly have told that this particular American was anything but a very gentle and unassuming anybody else—her Aunt Emmeline had come to her between tears and outraged indignation to assure her that if Eleanor's lover's father *were* dead she would be literally beggared.

It put a new light upon the fact—she had discovered it whilst her aunt had been spending last Christmas with them—that her aunt received by post a journal called the *Investor's Guide*. No one had ever exactly known how her Aunt Emmeline's money had been invested: one associated her so definitely with a family solicitor's advice: she took her needs to be so small that it was incredible that she should have tried speculation—and speculation of the wildest sort.

It came, in fact, to this quiet girl of thirty or so as a revelation—as the shock of an earthquake might have done. It revealed to her her aunt as possessed of a perfect abyss of cupidity—though she could not in the least imagine what she would propose to do with money when she had it. It had worried her, too—this revelation—because it seemed to show that

the influence of her lover's father had spread from the town with a queer name where he resided even to the decorous and quite ordinary Red Hill, where her aunt's creeper-bedecked villa offered a small white drive to the impeccable suburban street.

For her aunt had announced that since Eleanor's engagement she had decided to follow the fortunes of the Charles Collar Kelleg companies: she had speculated in the shares of the enterprises that—according to the *Investor's Guide*—C. Collar Kelleg sustained with his voice from Kellegville, Ma. It was not enough for her to say to her aunt that her lover dissociated himself from his father, his father's enterprises, and—as far as he decently could—from his father's State. It did not even mitigate her aunt's wrath when Eleanor said that she herself, in the course of her long intimacy with the son, had only four times heard him mention his father's name. Her aunt had the crushing reply that if her *fiancé* had not been his father's son she would never have let herself be drawn into speculating—on the cover system—in the Kelleg group of companies.

That announcement had, in a sense, relieved the girl's mind. It meant that her aunt might be a solitary speculator on this side of the water. For of late so considerably had the name of Collar Kelleg figured in the world as that of an engineer of combines, a breaker of American railway laws, or an amateur of the Fine Arts, that she had come to fear that each inhabitant of each ivy-covered house that she called on in Canterbury, Kent, England, was concerned in the fate of—was certain to be ruined by—C. Collar

Kelleg, of Kellegville, Ma., U.S.A. Only a fortnight before she had taken her lover to a garden-party at one of the Canons' houses. And when she had introduced him to the Canon himself, the Canon—a wearied-looking cleric with side whiskers and a not too new coat, a clergyman reported to be in difficulties even with his butcher—the Canon had said:

“Not really a relation of—of *the* Collar Kelleg?”

And when her lover had winced, when making the confession of a relationship that he always left undefined, the Canon, exhibiting at once a latent eagerness and an ostentatious official indifference, had asked:

“And is it true that he . . . that your uncle, is it? . . . meditates buying up . . . acquiring an interest in . . . all our railway lines between . . . Liverpool and the Metropolis?”

The young man had answered:

“Why: you cannot tell. *I* cannot. Of course there are so many things that he controls. He might want to send them backwards and forwards between New York and London. And Liverpool's on the way between, of course.”

The Canon had choked in his throat at these words, to which he seemed to accord a huge gravity, and she had been conscious that, in and out among the clumps of cedars on that sunny lawn, no person ever spoke to the Canon that afternoon without hurrying away to another group of guests with an announcement that caused heads to turn in their direction. It affected her to a pitch of nervousness—so that for a moment or two she was relieved when her lover was

disengaged by a lady with a pink dress and a pleasant laugh. She stood alone by a clump of hydrangeas waiting for him to rejoin her, and a voice behind her back uttered:

"Oh, I suppose he's come down to see if he won't buy the cathedral."

And another:

"Oh, he *couldn't* do that, could he? Doesn't it belong to the State or something?"

She felt herself grow warm from her feet to the roots of her hair, and she hurried aimlessly away as the first voice exclaimed:

"Yes. That's the point of my joke. Thank goodness here's *one* thing these fellows can't . . ."

She hurried away—aimlessly. The Canon's garden had such high walls that it seemed to her, precisely, that what she wanted to do was to sink into the ground. If only her lover had not been Collar Kelleg! He had every other possible quality—stability, kindness, gentleness, the right brown eyes, the right full voice, the right brown moustache, the right great height. It was only his portentous identity that jarred on the perfection of the afternoon. For the grass was so green that the tall cedars appeared dark blue: the garden was full of pleasant people: the high, brick walls gave a comforting feeling of privacy; the tallest, square tower of the cathedral peered down upon them, almost golden in the sunlight, benignly, like a great benediction from many tranquil ages. It ought to have been such a perfect afternoon, that on which she introduced her lover to her people, for if they were not—the Canon's

guests—her own family, they were, very exactly, her clan; some very rich, some decently poor, some very clerical, some decently scholarly, some with great estates, some with great mortgages—but all, down to the red-haired archdeacon from a northern diocese, all quiet, unobtrusive and presentable after you made allowances. And she, if she were the handsomest girl there, was not very noticeably so. She would not have wanted more.

It was only her lover who stood out, by reason of a portentous name. And she found herself explaining to several intimately sympathetic ladies that he was not really at all closely connected to *the* Mr Collar Kelleg; that they were not in communication with one another; that her *fiancé* had not been in America for fifteen years; that he all but made his own living; that, in fact, you could hardly call him American at all. And she tried to put it, as unobtrusively as possible, that, if his means would run to it, they intended to settle down in one of the little, old, good houses near the City and live as a nice young couple should. To the objection that her father would miss her a great deal she went even so far as to hazard that they might settle down with him at the end of the two years or so that their engagement would last. Only of course it was awkward that her *fiancé* needed a studio. Her father would not feel inclined to sacrifice a greenhouse or part of his garden in which to build a shed with a north light.

It had not been through any lack of veracity that she had so painted the probable course of their future. It had so presented itself to her: her lover,

even, had so projected it. He too loved that simple, tranquil, fine life: he loved, that is to say, the outward aspects of it: the broad, smooth downs, the gently-aged houses, the dependable servants, the quiet, filled streets, the soft colours. It was he even who suggested that they might share the house with her father. He could not imagine a better-ordered type of life. There was only London that was finer—and they could go up to London as often as they pleased. The only obstacle was that her father had a blind prejudice against Americans—against the American point of view: against the American scholarship: against the very name. He went so far—he, the politest of men, who had put no obstacle but muteness against her engagement—went so far as to say that he would discharge his servants, pack up his books and go back to Cambridge before ever an American should take up permanent lodgings in his house. He had never met an American before he met her *fiancé*; but he changed none of his views when he did meet him.

Nevertheless, until that fatal Monday when the papers had suddenly—with special cables—announced the death of Charles Collar Kelleg, she had to herself, as to all her relations and friends, mitigated her lover's Americanism, and she and he together had speculated upon which of the many pleasing houses near the ancient valley city should eventually hold them and witness their unobtrusive joys.

II

THE death of his father put all this in an entirely different light. She felt herself, vaguely, that his inheritance of immense "interests" in the country across the water must render him infinitely more American. You might mitigate the fact that he had been born in Idaho and had lived till he was four in the town of Hut, Montana. The truth suggested itself at once that to be born in a stable does not make a man even a groom. But to have been born there, and then, in addition, to control the output of thirty-seven billion loaves of bread, three railway and eleven steamship lines—all these things together would make it impossible for him to pass as one of "ourselves." There was, of course, the immense wealth, but that was a thing so invisible that it could not be called any equivalent for the age, comfort and presentability of Cuddiford House—the small manor that they had half decided to take. At the same time it rendered Cuddiford House impossible. You could not live in it and be the wealthiest commoner in England! A week ago they had not been certain that they could afford even Cuddiford! Now . . .

Sitting on the edge of her chair in her father's dining-room, where he had awaited her, she said almost faintly:

"Oh, it can't be as bad as that?"

He looked at her with his brows wrinkled.

"As bad as what?" he asked.

"As that you're the richest citizen in the world!"

His face cleared, and from the rich enhancing of his colour it might have been said that he blushed with pleasure.

"You can't tell how glad I am," he answered, "that you call it bad!" He hesitated, and then added: "But I'm determined to end it. To end it or mend it. I've been thinking of that—if you agreed, and I was certain you *would* agree—all the way down from town."

He had brown hair that waved a very little; he had a straight nose; he was dressed in a very perfect suit of brown, and you certainly could not have called him anything but a very perfectly typical Englishman, if it had not been that, just at times, his brown, seal-like eyes were a very little too intelligent. He was so tall that his motion across the room was a noticeable fact: he was so good to look upon that to be towered over by him was a pleasure: and the fact that he only held out to her both his hands to take both hers was so exactly the right resealing of their bond of union that, as his large, firm fingers closed upon hers, she felt impelled to utter the words:

"Oh, I don't *like* Americans!" in an intermezzo of pleasure and relief.

It was the little intimacy that she allowed herself—as another girl might whisper to her lover: "I don't, as a rule, like Roman noses—but the rest of you makes up for yours!"

He had heard her say the same thing several times

before, so that he accepted the compliment with a fine, friendly smile and reverted to the first question.

"It's the trick of my—my compatriots," he said, "to call everything they possibly can the largest thing in the world. I suppose it's because they're—we're—idealists." He pressed her hands gently. "All the same those are the words of my father's head agent in London—his very words. And he happens to be an Englishman."

Whilst she walked erectly to the sofa his soft eyes followed her firm figure, dwelt with admiration on the dark hair that rose in the curve of a Phrygian cap, and passed down to her white, firm hands. His brown eyes were indeed full of love and of trustfulness, to which there was added a certain gladness. He had doubted that she would see eye to eye with him, but there had been forced from her, without any lead from him, the one word, "bad," that he needed. She sat still and pliantly upon the edge of the long, red lounge. Its walnut back above the velvet cushions was carved into tiny, smiling, cherub faces; above her head was a circular mirror that reflected, with gracious distortions, in bows and curves, the long windows and the silver candlesticks upon the table. It was exactly the place in which she should be; if she had not chosen the furniture or the darkish, pleasant atmosphere of the not too old room, she had at least inherited the right to fit into it. Sitting there, doing nothing, waiting for life to pass, she seemed exactly to represent what he most delighted in. If she did not represent—if he did not feel for her—passion, she

did represent a feeling of the Best. She held all the charm of a life so ordered that, if you did not inquire too closely into whether its domestics had a share in ideals and comforts, represented something as near a perfect, a heavenly, peace as you could find on this earth . . .

"Bad!" he repeated, as he moved to sit beside her. "It's so bad that it will mean an infinite amount of worry for me—on the other side. I'm quite determined—and you will be, when you know, if you ever do, what it's like—to put things straight." And he clasped his hands over one knee that he crossed above the other.

She smiled a little.

"Yes. I suppose you'll have the power to put some things straight now," she said. He gazed at the blue and red pile of the carpet and his eyes strayed, musingly, up the fluted, dark legs of the dining-table.

"Heaven knows," he said, "it is not power that's given me. It's a burden; it's a duty."

She dropped one of her hands affectionately upon his fingers.

"Oh, well, old boy," she said, after a moment's thought, "it's not much good trying to redress the burdens of our ancestry. I'm pretty certain I should not be sitting here if it were not for the crying injustice one of the Grevilles made his money by centuries ago."

He clasped her hands with some of his long fingers.

"Oh," he said, "that's vague and indefinite and

long ago and undecipherable. Besides, it was in the spirit of the time of your ancestors."

She laughed at him still.

"Well, I suppose it would be pretty difficult to discover whom to give *our* money back to."

He turned to her a face so full of earnestness and force that she did not laugh any more. His voice, if it was tender, came from deep in his chest.

"It's precisely because it is not difficult to discover whom my father robbed that I'm going to stop the robbery," he said. "Why," he continued, "at this moment you're paying my father—you're paying *me*—half as much again as you ought to for half the things you wear and half the things you eat. It's worse for the poor people here: it's infinitely worse for the poor over there. They've paid taxes to him—they're paying them to me—at this moment—on light, on house rent, on locomotion, on bread, on salt. There's hardly a thing that my father has not made the starving starve worse for need of. Ice now is a necessity in the slums of New York—and you don't know what slums there are in New York." His voice got deeper: he was taking breath for a new outburst. "What do you think my father and his associates have done for ice? They've let the sun into their blockhouses on the Lakes: they've kept back all the ice-fleet a whole month: they've . . ."

"But is not that," she interrupted him with her slow, submissive and deep tones, "isn't that in the spirit of the time—over there? Just as much as the peculations of our ancestors, here, were in the spirit of their time?"

He swept back a heavy lock of hair from his forehead.

“Good heavens, no!” he said. “Do you think that was what the Minute men died at Lexington for? Do you think that’s what humanity’s come to? It is not in the spirit of the time. It’s a throwback: it’s a survival. It is not—it is not. What America’s there for, is to carry the thing one step further: to do what Europe is too tired to do: Heaven help us: what’s America for in the scheme of things if it isn’t for that?”

She said, lightly and tenderly:

“I did not know you were as American as all that!”

He bent his head close to hers.

“It’s just because I’m not American: it’s just because I’m suspended between heaven and earth, like Mahomet’s coffin, that I see things so clearly. Consider: you’ve struggled up here, in Europe, to a certain stage of justice, of peace, of goodness of heart. It’s taken you ages to do it. But you *are* at a fine pitch. Over there they’ve started from where you left off: they’ve had the freedom you’ve had to fight for: they’ve had the wealth that it’s been always so difficult to wring from the earth here. Don’t you see? Don’t you *see*? It is not in the spirit of their time: it is not in the spirit of yours. He’s an accident—a phenomenon such as my father and his fellows: it’s due to the fact that they have to handle such tremendous masses of things. But I, just because I’m not an American, nor yet a European—I want, now I’ve got the duty laid on me, to break

up one of the boulders that's in the way of their car. They need a fair chance: they need decent treatment from Providence. It's too bad that, just because accident has placed the power in the hands of a few throwbacks, a whole, fine, generous step in the progress of humanity should be hindered."

"You know you *can* talk," she said. "But I really believed that they were all the same over there—that it *was* in the spirit of the age to make trusts."

He came back from the state of mind in which he had allowed himself to voice a great many pent-up thoughts—thoughts that he had repressed for years in order to come into line with his undemonstrative environment.

"Yes," he laughed, "I have been treating you as if you were a public meeting. But whom am I to talk to if I do not to you?"

"Oh, I quite like it," she said almost shyly. "I do like to hear you say you'll do things. And I don't doubt you're right."

"It isn't a change in me," he answered. "I don't change. It would have been foolish to talk of doing things when there did not seem the ghost of a chance that I'd ever have any power. Now it's different." He accepted the shy tone of her voice then. "Of course you'd like me to do things. I daresay it's seemed a defect in me that I was mild and ineffectual. But you'll see a change!"

She smiled.

"I don't mean to let you upset things here.

There's nothing that really wants changing. But out there—if you don't go away from me to do it—it doesn't seem to matter."

He shook his head and put the tip of her ring finger to his lips. When his eyes came back from the carpet to her face he began again:

"Of course it's a mathematical absurdity," he laughed, "that *all* the eighty million inhabitants of the United States should be engaged in founding Trusts. It's the infinitely few that do it."

"That's why it is not in touch with the spirit of the age?" she asked.

"That's why," he nodded. "The huge—the infinite—mass of the people are good, decent, hard-working, and awfully idealist. Think of their record! They want Liberty, they want it as they want the air they breathe. And that's fine. It *is*. Why, it's a fine imagination—even if it's a clumsily-executed lump—the figure of Liberty that you'll have to see for yourself before very long. It *is* fine. Only it's always so tremendously in evidence that you forget it—just as you'd forget the sun here if you ever saw enough of it to make you get used to it."

She mused.

"I suppose I *shall* have to go with you—out there—one day, for a time at least."

"Yes." He caught at her thoughts. "It will make an incredible change all this. But only for a time. I shall get rid of it all. It won't be very difficult—only, there will be arrangements to make—employees to settle. I've an idea of co-operative

factories—something large and fine. But of course the ground will have to be studied. It will take time—you'll have to help me. And then, when it's all fixed up, we shall come back here as if nothing had happened—and no doubt we shall be able to afford Cuddiford House. I don't imagine that *all* my father's money was made nefariously."

She startled him by saying:

"I suppose your father *is* actually dead."

His mind was so distinctly more upon the future than upon even the immediate present that it was a moment before he could bethink him to draw from a side pocket a long slip of bluish paper.

"Here's the private cable," he said. "Mackinnon deciphered it."

And whilst, with her eyebrows raised, she ran her glance down the paper, he moved beside her so that his head nearly touched her shoulder, and gave fragmentary explanations.

"Mackinnon," he said, "was my father's chief agent in London. He holds the secret cipher book. The man who sent it—Maginnis—is an Irishman. He's—so they say—my father's *âme damnée*—as remarkable a man as my father. At the head of *all* the combination. So that he speaks with the weight of about six hundred firms, there and here . . ."

She interrupted him with: "Is this possible?"

"That my father controlled six hundred firms? Why," he said, "I don't know that the figure's an exactly round number, but . . ."

She interrupted him again, a little impatiently:

"Oh!—*that's* possible. But that your father

should . . .” and she pointed her white, little finger at the line of a paper.

“Oh!—*that*,” he said, “that’s entirely likely. You may take it for gospel truth.”

“What a huge sum the cable must have cost!” she said as a side issue.

“You’ve got to revise all your ideas,” he answered. “The cable may have cost a hundred pounds. But that’s not even a drop in the bucket compared with what’s always at stake. Why, this combination handles—I don’t know—a million dollars a day! I don’t know. I don’t suppose they know themselves—that anybody ever *could* know—because the circumstances of the businesses are so vast and change so rapidly that everything might be something else before you could possibly calculate where you stood at any given hour.”

She dropped the consideration with:

“It makes one feel giddy.”

And he with: “Yes, it’s like trying to think what would become of you if you fell overboard in mid-Atlantic. The depths are bottomless.”

They returned to the consideration of the cable, when she said:

“But which are we to believe? That your father died because the medicine he took was not properly made up, or because he was drugging himself to look ill for the sake of deceiving the reporters?”

He removed the hand that held her disengaged fingers to touch his moustache, a gesture that aided his reflections.

“You can believe either,” he said. “Or

both. Or nothing. Or even something quite different."

Her dark eyes rested for a moment upon him, affectionately, seeking further explanation, and he added:

"My father certainly suffered from *angina pectoris*. He certainly took nitrate of amyl for it. And a chemist over there is equally capable of giving him capsules without any nitrate of amyl in them. No doubt, if the truth came to be known, the chemist's shop was owned by one of my father's own combinations. In that case they'd certainly have had instructions to run the business as economically as possible. And nitrate of amyl costs money. In that case, not even a man as rich as my father could have got the stuff pure. No one could in the whole continent."

He considered again for a moment.

"But the whole thing with its ramifications is so infinite that it makes one tired. Why, it doesn't even begin to end there. The capsules my father took may really have been perfectly all right. He may just have died. The whole story may be a lie. But his combination may be now intent on forming a combine of drug stores. They may want to raise a storm of indignation against druggists and then to buy up all the drug stores in America at cheap rates because of the discredit."

"What a frightful people!" she said.

"Oh!" he answered, "don't believe that they're frightful. The only wonderful thing is that we're only just beginning to understand such manœuvres."

They've been going on everywhere and always. What's hopeful is that now we're beginning to understand the method we shall arrive at a means of fighting it soon."

She did not answer that, but returned to her paper.

"But why should your father have wanted to make himself appear ill?"

"Oh," he answered, "that's simple. It's the only simple thing in the business—because, you see, it's the only place in which a human figure stands alone and is visible. All the rest is combines and numerals. This is a human dodge. It would be just like my father—who always was fond of a joke."

He reflected again for a moment.

"You've got to think that my father really was a striking man. My mother, of course, taught me to dislike his—his methods so much that I've shrunk from talking about him much, even to you."

"Yes," she answered, "I've learnt a great deal more of him from the papers than I ever heard from you."

He patted her hand deprecatingly.

"Well, don't bear a grudge against me for that," he said. "I sort of hoped that I should never have to talk to you about him. And the papers—Heaven knows!—always had enough in them about him for you to learn all you could possibly want to know—for the purpose of marrying me."

"You mean," she said, "that you never expected to be him—as you are now."

He smiled a little wearily and then kissed her.

"Never," he answered, and then: "But of course I'm not the man my father was. All the same . . ." and he straightened himself by pulling at the back seam of his coat, "I'm going to stand up against him now. I'm going to fight the influence he's left on the world."

She considered this announcement for long enough to rejoin:

"It almost seems a pity!"

He returned to his parable.

"You see: my mother, for all she was only a lady's-maid when he married her, was as English as you—or your friend the Canon's wife, or your father for that matter. She just hated his 'American methods' as much as ever your father could. I expect it was as much that as the 'Thing,' whatever it was, that my father had done that made her hate him so terribly."

She paused before she asked him:

"What *was* the thing your father did?"

He shook his head and answered:

"I don't know. As I've told you two or three times, there was something. But my mother never told me. She had a sort of loyalty to my father after all. It may have been murder . . ."

"It hadn't anything to do with another woman?" she asked.

"Oh, dear no," he answered, "my mother had too much knowledge of life to expect my father to be faithful to her. No: it *may* have been murder—my mother would not have liked murder. But I think it had to do with my father's having been

disloyal to a friend. Once or twice before she died she spoke of a man called Kratzenstein. I think my father stole a mine from him. Something like that. My mother, you see, would not have been able to stand—she would not have been able to *understand*—that sort of crime.”

Eleanor commented: “Ah!”

“But my father,” he continued, “my father, I imagine, would have considered it a good—or sardonic—joke to rob a man who trusted him. Probably Kratzenstein was robbing someone else already . . . you can’t tell.”

She scratched her cheek reflectively.

“I think I understand your mother’s standpoint,” she said.

“Oh, my father’s is absolutely simple,” he answered. “What he wanted was fun. If he diddled Kratzenstein it was for the pure fun of diddling. If he’s made the largest fortune in the world it was for the same reason. If he tried to make himself appear ill to the reporters, that was because it was a lark. No doubt the lark’s only huger if he actually killed himself over it. I wouldn’t mind betting that if he’s left his fortune to me it was because he saw it would be a tremendous bother to me. He was not the type of man who’d want to found a dynasty. I guess he thought I was a terrific prig.”

“I think I’m rather glad he did,” Eleanor answered.

He meditated upon the point as if he were not quite certain.

“I think my mother was glad of that too. You

see, she hadn't a sense of humour. I fancy my father thought she was a prig too. He used to be amused at her—and at me. I suppose I *haven't* any sense of humour."

"I'm glad of that too," she said softly. She considered once more.

"I'm sometimes sorry, in a sneaking way," he said. "It makes me seem less of a man."

She said, with a little wounded intonation:

"Then you don't care what I care! "

"Oh, for goodness' sake," he said, "don't say that. If I did not care what you cared should I be here consulting you? "

In a swift access of tenderness she put her cheek against his.

"You dear!" she said in soft tones of emotion. Then she drew back and looked into his eyes from quite close. "At the same time I don't see what we're consulting *about*."

He knelt down suddenly and kissed first one foot and then the other, that she held a little out as if to a shoe-black, pulling her skirt a little back and peering over.

"We are not consulting about *things*," he said, from his knees, "we're getting to know each other better and better. We're consulting about our points of view." As he knelt she put her hand upon his head. "That's why we can't keep to any straight line," he concluded.

"At the same time," she said, "we ought to talk about something. There seems to be such a tremendous lot to *do*."

"Oh—to *do*," he said, with a touch of deprecation. "The only thing to do is for me to show you how I worship you."

"That is very American, isn't it?" she asked, as if she were inclined to take advantage of both people's traits. He was to behave like a European and to be as devoted as the Transatlantic is supposed to be. He rose, however, to his feet.

"Yes, I suppose we've got to settle on some line of action," he said. "Where are we?" He took a little pencil from his waistcoat pocket and ran it through the hair above his brows.

"I have not ascertained a single thing," she said. "Not one that's definite. Here's this telegram? Who is it from? What does it really mean? What are you going to do?"

"I'll write that down," he said, and when he had taken from his pocket an old envelope he jotted down upon his knee the three headings. "We need," he concluded, "some sort of anchor to hold us to the ground."

He took from her the copy of the deciphered cable and tapped it with the back of his pencil.

"Where does it come from?" he quoted. "New York. And from Patrick C. Maginnis. That's fairly certain, because it was sent in a code that *only* Maginnis uses. My father, even, was not acquainted with it. That was their safeguard. Maginnis, in the combine, represented the heads of businesses who were not my father. That settles where it comes from." He wrinkled his brows. "Now, as for *what* it means?" He reflected for a moment. "Let's

read the cable word for word." She nodded and he went on: "'*John Collar Kelleg died on Sunday at 4.30 in the afternoon.*' There's a definite statement. It may be a lie. My father *may* have got Maginnis to cable it for his own purposes."

"What sort of purposes?" she asked.

"Well," he answered, "consider the rest of the cable." He cleared his throat and read further, "'*It is urgent that this news be authoritatively denied and re-affirmed in all London papers until after Monday, when associates of all the Kelleg interests will meet and determine on plan.*' That may be true: it may be a dodge." He read on again. "'*Use all your influence with advertising staffs of London journals to give the matter prominence.*'"

He drew in a deep breath.

"Now, there's a pretty straight proposition at last," he said.

She moved her hand across her dark eyebrows.

"I'm an owl, I suppose," she said, "for I don't see it."

He patted her on the hand.

"I'd hate it if you did," he answered. "It's a blighting sort of knowledge that I wish I had not got to have myself. But there it is!"

He tapped her knuckles with his pencil.

"It's like this," he explained. "What's wanted is to keep Kelleg shares in the public eye. They go down when it's reported that Kelleg's dead; they go up when it's reported that he's alive. Well now, someone makes something out of each of those ups and downs. But what's wanted is a downward

tendency—not too swift just now, because they're not ready."

"But why?" she asked. "Why a downward tendency? They'd lose, wouldn't they?"

"You dear!" he answered.

After a moment he continued:

"Now, let's read the next sentence. '*On Monday you will declare unofficially that J. C. K. died by his own hand. Upon fall of shares in London markets you will purchase every purchasable cent's worth.*'"

"I am an owl," she said again. But, holding her head on one side, she touched suddenly her dark, smooth hair at the back. "Why!" she ejaculated.

He uttered: "Yes: you see the key. '*On Tuesday we shall declare the dividend of 17½ per cent. for the year of the whole combine. You will realise, upon the rising market, at your own discretion.*'"

"Oh!" she said, and a certain light came into her dark eyes. He took it for anger, and tenderly stroking her hand he whispered:

"Of course it's abominable to bring you into contact with these things . . ."

He looked round upon the comfortable, severe, darkened scholar's dining-room. He touched the red velvet of the sofa: his artist's eyes were gladdened with the Grecian bust of Aphrodite upon the black marble mantelpiece, by the large photographs of the Forum and by the shining clock that stood, as if dubiously hidden, against the light, between the two tall windows. It was symbolic—because Time, there, was not the important matter: the last thing you did was to look at the clock. And it shocked him

subconsciously that *he* should be bringing her into level with the times. But after all, as he considered, if they were making acquaintance with *that* sort of thing they were doing it in order to fight in the interests of *this* sort of thing.

"It is *dëgrading* . . ." he was beginning, but she interrupted him with animation and gratitude.

"It is very *interesting*," she said. "It is not exactly the thing for a lady to understand. But so many women have to look out for themselves nowadays."

"Your Aunt Emmeline?" he suggested.

She nodded and added: "Let me see if I *really* understand it."

She referred again to the paper. "Your father's associates are not—are not simply interested in the sales of what they manufacture, as one would expect of them. They're more interested in the price of their own shares. Then they do not hold all their shares?"

"Heaven knows what they hold," he said. "Perhaps not three penn'orth at this moment."

"But if . . ." and she laid her hand on his as the luminous idea came to her, "if they can make a fuss about your father they will call attention to the shares. And if they can put it about that your father committed suicide, the people who hold the shares will think he did it because the—the companies are ruined and he knew it." He nodded at her reasoning. "And these people will sell their shares for very little money. And your father's associates, who know that a very big profit has been made last

year, will buy these shares for almost nothing?" He nodded again enthusiastically. "So that, when your father's associates declare that dividend the shares will go up to huge prices, and they will hold the shares, and they'll take nearly all the huge profits of the dividend and then sell the shares again at a very high price . . ."

"You make me frightened," he laughed at her. "You've a perfect genius for finance."

"So that"—she ignored his sarcasm—"they'll have made a large amount of money and done nothing, and have just as many shares as before."

She was silent for a moment, taking in the vastness of the idea.

"So that's the sort of thing that goes on," she said.

"That sort of thing goes on, year in, year out. My father did nothing else all his life after he'd made his first start."

"But the little speculators—they'll find out now," she said.

"The little speculators never find out," he answered. "It's done every year: it's been done every year in full view of everybody and nobody ever grows wiser."

She reflected again for a moment, and then she said: "What's to become of Aunt Emmeline?"

"I shall have to lend her something to carry on with," he said.

She made a quick movement of repulsion.

"You can't! She's a lady. I can't have my relations sponging on you for *money*."

"My dear," he answered gravely, "that's the whole thing. She's a lady—but she's a fool. I shan't be lending to the lady but to the fool." He paused again for a moment. "It's inevitable. Don't you see? She has not been buying shares. If she had she could hold on to them till they rose. But she has not. She's got nothing to hold on to. She'll have to go on dropping money into this well until its water rises and comes back to her reach again."

"It's degrading," she answered.

He said, gravely still:

"Yes, everything's degrading—to a lady. But I daresay she didn't understand." And, after a moment, he added: "You said, a moment ago, that with so many women about who've got to look after themselves it's time women understood this sort of thing. It *is*."

"But if they understand—they're degraded," she said.

He caught her up with:

"That's the question of the whole theory of education. *Does* the degradation come with the knowledge or with the action? It's like a cheap debating society's thesis. But if your aunt had understood what she was up to she probably would not have been the fool she has been . . .

"You see, my dear," he added, "it's a question of a whole social side. This sort of thing . . ." and he waved his hand abroad to the clock, the silver candlesticks, the bust on the mantelpiece and the beautifully polished steel fireirons that stood in the high steel fender. "This sort of thing is beautiful,

but it's expensive. If women have to have this sort of thing, to lead this splendid, cloistral life, someone's got to provide the investments in Consols to do it on. It's a divine ideal: it's you. But you represent all that your fathers have scraped together—or a pretty good share of it . . .”

“I don't see what you're getting at,” she said.

“We're getting at the fact that you're the most beautiful thing the world's produced,” he said.

“But the world's changing so fast,” she said, with her little mouthing of pleasure.

“No, no,” he said quickly. “An ideal does not change.”

She kissed him for that, but while she kissed him she said:

“But I'm changing. I've learnt an infinite amount this very afternoon.”

With his arm round her fine waist he uttered his confession of faith:

“No: you haven't changed. It cannot affect *you*. You're cast in too hard a mould.” It was, literally, the hardness of her clean drawn figure, her stays beneath his hand, that had suggested the idea to him. She gave exactly that impression of perfection that could not be damaged. Her bust with its fine rounding, her skirts with their fine, long lines, her clearly moulded cheeks with their fine, dark colour, the clear outlines of her hair—all these things that he so much admired made him eloquent to say: “It isn't you that are in any danger. You'll always see the ugliness of what my father stood for. It's your business to be a shining example; it's

your business to teach the Aunt Emmelines of this world what to avoid. You've taught me so much . . ."

She denied, with a happy and credulous blush, that she had ever taught him anything.

"Not in words," he conceded. "But merely to look at you is enough!"

He moved away from her and leant back in the corner of the sofa, his hands clasped behind his head. He looked at her. "That's enough," he said, "to teach me volumes and volumes!"

She made a little, obvious, pleased retort, and he continued speculatively:

"I'd be an absolute fool if I did not learn from being with you how to live the best sort of life. Just as we should be fools if we could not learn from that Venus"—and he pointed to the Aphrodite that, with vacant, dreaming eyes and clear-cut, vaguely smiling lips, confronted a whole vision world from the black polished mantel—"a whole side of beauty in Art and life."

"All the same," she said, "I am corrupted. I'm perfectly itching to know more about your father—and what he did—and what you're going to do, and all the sort of thing that people like that *do* do."

He unclasped his hands a little unwillingly and, leaning forward, used them to emphasise his meanings.

"No, that is not corruption in you," he said. "It's the call of duty. If there were not men in the world like my father, and if there were not affairs like my father's, people like you would be able to

live your beautiful cloistral lives without having to bother about American business methods. Well, it's our affair—yours and mine—to drive that sort of thing out of the world."

With a sudden access of fury he slapped one fist into the palm of his other hand.

"And, by Jove," he said, "I've got a chance to cripple *one* Trust, and I'm—going—to—do—it!"

The animation dropped from his voice, and he leaned once more in his corner of the large sofa.

"After that's done," he said, "we shall come back here and pick up—no, not the pieces but the whole—of the life we intended to lead, and you'll forget everything of this, and I shall be able again to do, as I'm desperately wanting to do now—just to look at you leading your beautiful life as if nothing had ever happened to it."

"But does not everything that happens modify one's life for ever?" she asked.

"Only in novels," he said. "You've got to look at it in a different way. There's one's life—and there's the accidental life that goes on all round one. If you go to a garden-party it doesn't affect your life in this house: you go out for an hour and a half, that's all. If I'm painting a picture and I find the canvas is not quite properly stretched I go down into the basement and borrow a hammer from the caretaker of the studio. I come back and tap in the wedges of the stretcher behind the canvas. But that does not modify the picture. It's an excursion. And our excursion to the new world is just going down into the basement to borrow a hammer." He

paused to survey her unconvinced face. "Only, my love," he said, "I've *got* the hammer. My father's left it me. All I've to do is tap the wedges!"

She took up again the cable that lay upon the sofa between them. She did not wish to continue the arguments, either as to whether she remained uncorrupted or as to whether you can change and not change. She said:

"You've explained 'Who it's from?' and a good deal of 'What it really means?' but you have not at all told me 'What are you going to do?'"

He had a great deal of patience even in a contest of wills like this with her, but he pleaded for grace at this.

"It'll bore you to hear it twice," he said. "I shall have to tell it all to your father. Let's wait till then." It was her father's polite practice at half-past six to enter the dining-room when his daughter's suitor was there, and to address to him a certain number of remarks. If, on the other hand, the young couple wished to be alone they retired to a room more private, and Mr Greville, after peeping through the half-opened door, would, in his turn, retire once more to his study till dinner-time. It was with reference to this established custom that she said:

"Shan't we go to my sitting-room?"

But he answered:

"No: your father's got to be faced and enlightened and rendered hostile—and the sooner it's done the better." And then, resuming his pleading: "Only, till then"—and his eyes sought the decorous

clock—"we've got ten minutes. Let's be desultory. We shall have to be businesslike enough. You'll have it all and to spare. But till then let's just talk. You've got to hear—and I can't tell it you often enough—that you're the most beautiful thing in the world."

She leant back now against her end of the long couch, and she had an air of complacent resignation: he was so tall, so brown, so gentle and so fluent, that even eating muffins by a good fire in November, after coming in from the rain, was not more pleasant than being told in his endless digressions that he loved her.

"You see," he began his flow of words that was to last for ten minutes, "when you're at leisure you taste life—and it's just because this life here is the fine flower of leisure that it's the most perfect thing in the world. It's brought up to its highest pitch. Now you . . ."

III

IT was not only a forecast of his plans that the young man had to offer to Mr Greville, it was also a detailed biography. Mr Greville was of an extreme height and meagreness: he wore always a black frock coat—he had never explained why—he was clean shaven, and, because his beard grew with extravagant thickness and speed, he shaved always twice a day—before breakfast and before dinner, which he took at nine. The apparent keenness of his black eyes—though he was actually extremely short-sighted—the forward tilt of his head and a habit of listening to every speech with his lips parted and his head a little averted, gave to his whole bearing an air of deaf obstinacy. He had had no history: a younger son of a huge family it gave one the idea that his people must have been of a fabulous richness, that he had never done anything to add to his patrimony: he had married a woman of no particular dowry, he had always eaten the best things in the world, bought the best printed and the best bound books, and had the best servants. He sought in life for an extreme accuracy of mind, and having, whilst at college, contracted a habit of reviewing books for a magazine started in his day by the undergraduates, he had continued to review books until that day—consecrating his labours to the service of a

journal chiefly distinguished for its staff of reviewers, who were unequalled in discovering minute errors in works of encyclopædic length. He discovered errors in books on every conceivable subject, and because this sedentary occupation was unnatural to one of his physical robustness he had cultivated the habit of standing at most times when other people sat down. Thus, he stood all through such church services as he attended; it was his custom to take his breakfast standing, and at dinner he remained upon his legs until he had finished his soup. It was, nevertheless, characteristic of the society in which he lived that although he did everything that was possible differently from everybody else, and although he differed in his views from almost every soul that he met, no one seriously considered that he was at all extraordinary, and his opinions were sought for with anxiety by the higher clergy of the diocese when they were troubled in matters of ritual, or by the Conservative candidates of the county when they were preparing electioneering speeches.

It was part of his routine of studied politeness to Kelleg that every time the young man dined with them he should deem it his duty to pass exactly fifty minutes in the society of the young couple. It was his habit on those occasions to ask the young man what story he was illustrating for the magazines, and, having heard the plot, he would analyse the idea, state what stories it resembled, and carry back the analogy to Grecian, Indian or prehistoric originals.

On this occasion, having shaken the young man's

hand beside the sofa, he retreated to the other side of the dining-table, and so far departed from precedent as to say that he trusted the young man had received less disquieting reports as to the state of his father's health from across the Atlantic. He then turned his face to one side and, resting his knuckles upon the table, prepared to listen. His daughter's suitor replied by passing the cable across the table.

"It will save time, sir," he said, "if you read this. It will make, you will see, a great deal of difference to everything."

Mr Greville, with a slightly distasteful expression, fumbled for his pince-nez. He disliked being seen to wear glasses anywhere: he particularly disliked to have to put them on outside his study. Nevertheless, holding the tortoiseshell rims a little over to one side, he read down the paper. His first words were: "I trust you will present my condolences to any surviving relatives of your father's."

The young man laughed friendly. The dislike of his *fiancée's* father couldn't inspire his indefatigable optimism with the belief that they wouldn't one day hit it off together. Besides, Mr Greville's presence acted to such an extent as a tonic upon his mental faculties that he felt always a pleasant hardening of his own backbone when they were together.

"My father hadn't a relative in the world," he said. "He was born in the workhouse at Rydale in Yorkshire—not a quarter of a mile from where I've heard you say *you* were born."

Mr Greville gazed straight in front of him.

"That explains his extraordinary name," he said.

"I recollect that two of the guardians of the poor in our parish in the year 1840 were called, the one Collar and the other Kelleg."

The young man laughed again.

"I guess," he said, "that most of the extraordinary American names have some such European beginning. And most of the extraordinary American customs too!"

Mr Greville stored the remark in his memory that he might, at a later moment, demonstrate its inaccuracy. Immediately he asked:

"And your own name? It is not an American perversion of John?"

"Oh, I'm called Don," the young man answered, "because my mother was lady's-maid in the family of 'the something Don'—an Irish family, you know. My mother had a great feeling of gratitude to her employers. They treated her very kindly."

Mr Greville supplied the name of the Irish family in question and added a slight—and a slightly favourable—"Hum!" It distinctly pleased him that Don's mother should, in spite of the fact that she became an American, have retained so proper a sentiment of respect for the ancient European family in whose service she had been.

The young Don was so fortified by this sign and so stimulated by his future father-in-law's presence that he could come straight to the mark.

"If you don't object," he said, "I'm going to tell you all about myself. It hasn't seemed necessary till now to trouble you, beyond assuring you, as I've tried to do by the sight of me, that I'm a decent sort

of citizen and properly devoted to Eleanor. Now it's different, and if you don't mind I'll take up so much of your time."

Mr Greville assented, as much by moving his clenched fist an inch or two further along the edge of the tablecloth as by any other sign that he gave. Eleanor settled herself more comfortably in the cushions at the end of the lounge. She was complacently aware that her lover was about to utter an immense flow of words, and if she was afraid that he might, in the course of them, irritate her father by inaccuracies in his generalisations, she knew her father well enough to beware that this would not increase his personal dislike of her lover. He was so nice, so pleasant, and so ingenuous, and he had made that much of a good impression on her father as to make him take in the fact that, although Don's father had been born in a workhouse and his mother had been a lady's-maid, you could not really call either of them Americans. Mr Greville had never listened to her upon the subject. He had accepted, in grim silence, the fact that she had engaged herself to "an American": he had been marvellously polite to her lover because he owed that to the future husband of his daughter. But he had not once brought himself to talk the matter over. She had accepted this as she had accepted his obstinacy of drinking his soup standing. It was not a thing you could argue about. In the same way she accepted her lover's decree that he was going to talk, and she let her mind wander away upon the point of what sort of mourning she must wear for his father whilst she

kept an attentive ear for any new fact that might appear in a biography that she had already heard more than once. For decidedly she *must* wear some sort of mourning as soon as the fact of the death should become officially known.

Don began his story with the succinct statement that he had been born exactly thirty-one years before, to a day, in the then uncharted territory of Idaho. Mr Greville received this exact statement with satisfaction, but the young man could not remain in a rigour of precision. He had at once to introduce his impressions and his memories. Of his first three years he had not any memories at all, but his mother had told him that they had borne hardships, and his father had since told him that his mother had borne these hardships with a courage that was admirable in a woman who had been brought up as she had.

"And indeed," Don hazarded the digression, "it's one of the wonderful things about America that you'll find there literally multitudes of such women, putting up with a heat, squalor and hard work that they would not stand here for the promise of any riches."

"I suppose you lived in waggons?" Mr Greville pursued his search for the definite.

Eleanor, for her part, had arrived at the conclusion that she approved of mourning for the relatives of a girl's *fiancé*. It was a formality: a definite and clear assertion of recognition. And after next Monday there would not be any getting out of having the relationship with the late Collar Kelleg forced upon

them. She had been able to avoid the subject when fencing with her less intimate friends before. Now Mr Kelleg, by the nature of his death, would create such a splutter that they could not possibly avoid the notoriety. It would *have* to be faced . . .

"Oh, I don't know that it ran even to a waggon," Don was answering her father. "I know my people arrived after three years in the State of Montana. Copper was the actual attraction, I think—or it may have been gold . . ."

"No: copper was the cause of the growth of the State of Montana," Mr Greville said.

"I daresay," Don replied easily. "My father's energies have been so multifarious since then that I'm certainly a little vague."

"You may take it that it *was* copper," Mr Greville repeated.

"No doubt!" Don replied, and Eleanor shivered a little. This indifference to fact was precisely the thing to irritate her father: and indeed Mr Greville, standing sideways at the table, pursed his lips and moved his hand upon the cloth. "Anyhow," Don continued, "my father's actual beginnings were not in copper. He used to say that they lived for the first year upon the price for his vote—paid by both parties and for a vote he had not got, because he was not yet on the register."

"That must have been an exaggeration," Mr Greville said, "for it is given in evidence that the *highest* average amount paid even for the votes at the Senatorial elections in Montana was sixty-eight dollars per head of the population of the State.

Now, if your father had received sixty-eight dollars from each side the total amount would not have been more than twenty-seven pounds—so that they could not have lived for a year on the proceeds.”

“He might have received more than the average,” Don answered blandly. “It would have been like my father. Anyhow,” he added, “I was only trying to give you an idea of the sort of thing that went on round my cradle. But I guess, as you seem to know ten times as much about the State of Montana’s history as I do, I may as well drop that part of it.”

He considered for a moment, whilst Mr Greville was saying that the facts connected with the Montana elections had come under his notice because he had reviewed for the journal he aided the report of the United States Government inquiry into the contest.

“And the facts,” he said, “were sufficiently singular to remain in one’s memory.”

This conclusion gave the young man his opening.

“Yes,” he said, “you take the total bribery as so much per head of the population. But you do not take into account the fact that *all* the population did not receive bribes. . . . Oh, I know”—he was quick to countersigns of protest in Mr Greville—“a pretty large proportion did. I’m not trying to whitewash the State of Montana. The returns are there, certified by our Government. But”—and he grew more earnest—“my father was not the man to lie much, even when he was boasting of a—a successful misdemeanour. No doubt my father was speaking figuratively when he said that he lived for a

whole year on the bribes. He meant he got a pretty good whack—above the average, and a pretty good lot of what's to be accounted for by the citizens who would not be bribed."

"Your father," Mr Greville said, "received 362 dollars from one side and 379 from the other."

"Father," Eleanor said, "how *could* you remember that?"

"It was the most notorious instance cited by the Commission in their report," her father answered.

"There you are!" Don closed the matter triumphantly. "I *told* you my father would be the most notorious case. He always was."

The discussion at that point was so distinctly "up to" her father that Eleanor awaited his next attack. But Mr Greville remained silent and she recognised that he was not fighting an argumentative battle; he was trying to pin his young interlocutor down to definite statements. Thus, so far, they both triumphed, and Eleanor was not certain to which to accord the more, or the more affectionate applause.

"You say"—Don's pleasant organ took up the tale after he had had time to recover himself—"that copper was the distinguishing characteristic of the State of Montana; my impression of it was dust and petroleum. I do not in the least remember what the town of Hut, Ma., may have looked like when I was four." But he did know that when, by any chance, he nowadays got on a country road and an automobile passed, in the summer time, it made him feel four years old again. There was dust everywhere and paraffin in most places. And perhaps that

was why—as he put it—he passed most of his earliest recollected years in the barber’s shop. It had linoleum sides decorated with the portraits of ladies, whom he remembered as supremely beautiful, and portraits of gentlemen lathered up to the ears. And it had, above all, a heavenly odour! The oil of the essences and perfumes must so have pervaded the hot air that the dust could not there find entrance. He must have seen several thousand men shaved there—and half of them had since been hung and half had cottages at Newport. He could not remember them—but he could remember Miss Judie Cole, who was now Princess Abucatti. She had been the most disagreeable and the dirtiest child of four he had ever known, and they had fought a desperate battle in the barber’s saloon, using the pots of massage cream and the essence bottles for missiles. “I remember,” he concluded, and he supposed that the remembrance was typical of the sort of thing that impressed him, “a pot of cold cream was broken against a chair by us and we sprawled in it—Judie Cole and I—and I clawed the blue bows out of her dirty yellow pig-tails.”

He paused to take breath and to light a cigarette.

“That,” he said, “was the sort of infancy I had. Imagine the frail child amongst desperadoes and swindlers—and Jews! I remember the German voice of the barber—I can’t remember his face or his name or what his figure was—but his way of accenting ‘Ach! Der Goods!’ I suppose they tried to beat down his prices!”

He paused again.

"And positively the next thing I remember was—Bournemouth!" He looked round at Eleanor and interjected: "I told you all this part on top of a 'bus. Do you remember? In Tottenham Court Road? Yes," he continued to Mr Greville. "Not Bournemouth, Mass., nor Bournemouth, Fla., but Bournemouth, Hants, Eng., and a preparatory school—for the sons of gentlemen."

He became speculative once more.

"It's odd how absurd coincidences—silly synchronisations—get into one's life. I relate my biography to you in Canterbury, England, exactly thirty years later, on the very day of the year on which I was born in a nameless spot in Idaho, U.S.A. And on the very day on which I broke the pot of cold cream in the barber's shop my father struck oil, or copper, or whatever it was that he did strike. I suppose that's why I can't remember being strapped for wrecking the barber's. Perhaps my father was too engrossed with his success to attend to me."

He reflected again.

"But no!" he said, "that's not accurate. My father would not have strapped me for wrecking a barber's shop. He'd have given me shares in his mine instead. He'd have applauded the outbreak." He once more reflected and then added eagerly: "Yes, that's it. I got to Bournemouth precisely because my father did applaud that sort of thing."

Mr Greville turned his face interrogatively towards his prospective son-in-law.

"Don't you understand?" the young man asked. "That was where my mother came in. And no

doubt that was why I loved my mother and never bothered about my father."

"You're awfully obscure, Don dear," Eleanor interjected. "You must remember that my father hasn't heard all this as often as I have."

"That's true!" Don said. "I want to be clear. The fact is that my mother was fond enough of me to use the strap mighty often—and my father was fond enough of me to prevent her as often as he could."

It was at this point that Mr Greville astonished them both by sitting down—a thing he had not been known to do, save when he was "reading for review," for thirty years. He set both his hands upon his thin knees, and with the two tails of his frock-coat dropping behind his shins, and his face for the first time turned to Don, he uttered, with an accent of hollow attention:

"Let me understand. How did these facts conduce to your arriving at Bournemouth?"

As a matter of fact Don's involved unfolding of his biography so nearly affected him as a very inferior but interesting book for review would have done; it gave him so much necessity for thought that, as he always thought sitting, he now found it necessary to sit.

"But it's as plain as Domesday Book," Don said with exasperation. "My mother took me to Bournemouth, England, so as to be able to clout me as much as she thought fit!"

Mr Greville ejaculated a deep-lunged "Ah!" which gave Don Kelleg a moment to find contrition in.

"No, that's not a fair statement!" he uttered.

"But there are too many aspects. It is difficult. The coincidences come in again here." He passed his hand up his forehead. When he, as it were, emerged, it was to state that his breaking loose in the barber's shop had so exactly synchronised with his father's first fortune that it had precipitated the break between his parents. For, on the one hand, his mother had direfully proclaimed that such a day of outrage *must* be ended with a thrashing. His father had declared that such a day of good fortune would be celebrated by an absolute amnesty. "He simply would not let her wallop me," Don concluded. "He'd suffered it no doubt in silence before or argued against it. But that day he obstructed it actually."

Mr Greville nodded.

"And on that day particularly my mother felt sore."

Mr Greville interjected the one word, "Why?" as if he knew the answer.

"Because"—Don Kelleg faltered a little—"I suppose because on that day he'd found immense deposits—or whatever the word is—of copper on his mine."

"But your mother," Mr Greville continued without passion, "your mother must have been aware, before that day, that your father had stolen the mine . . ."

It was at this point that Eleanor leaned forward and exclaimed, "*Father!*" For it occurred to her, though it missed Don's perception altogether, that her lover had told her that his father had stolen a

mine before her father had come into the room.

"The late Mr Kelleg had stolen the mine at least three months before the day on which he discovered the great stores of copper that it contained. Your mother must therefore have been aware of the theft!"

Don scratched his head.

"Upon my word," he said, "you're right! I don't see how it works out." He halted, discomfited for a minute, and then he jumped at it. "Why, it's plain enough," he said, "she could not stand the two things. She might have stood his stealing a worthless mine, but she could not stand that the mine should be valuable and that I—I should be corrupted as well. The two together were too much for her."

Mr Greville moved his hands from his knees and folded his arms. His gesture reminded Eleanor for some vague reason of the Duke of Wellington at Waterloo. It was as if he had really uttered, whilst he closed up his telescope: "Order the whole line to advance!"

"My dear Don," he said, "that's what I've been wanting to get at all along. You've had a decent upbringing."

He paused and looked at Eleanor.

"You'll do me the justice to say," he continued, "that I have not opposed your freedom of choice. I have not, till now, sanctioned your engagement. Now . . ."

With a swift rush Eleanor was already half way round the table.

"You inscrutable person!" she said, and by that

time she had her arm on his shoulder. "Why in the world should you do it now that you've discovered his father was a thief?"

"I've known that all along," Mr Greville said, expressionlessly. Eleanor shrank back from him.

"You *are* incredibly mysterious!" she said. "Have you been using detectives? How *did* you know? Don does not."

"Don certainly doesn't," her suitor echoed her.

"That's because," Mr Greville said, "Don hasn't as much desire to know about his antecedents as I have."

He repeated, after Eleanor had kissed him:

"Don is not going to marry his own daughter. He's going to marry mine. He mayn't want to know the worst about himself: I do."

Don uttered: "By Jove! it's *true*." But Eleanor, putting her cheek against his as she leaned over his stooped figure, pointed at her lover.

"You could see for yourself," she said, "that he's the dearest and best and gentlest person in the world. Was not that enough?"

Mr Greville, who had an air of being politely discomfited by her embraces, lifted his head so that his piercing glance appeared hotly to challenge the young man whilst his words corrected her inexact superlatives.

"He appeared," he said to her, "to be excellent and gentle—and no doubt he was dear to you. But that does not provide settlements for you or a good strain for future generations."

Eleanor left him, to sit down on the chair that faced him across the window space. With *her* hands

on her knees, imitating his attitude, she had the air of making, with him, a pair of wardens of a gateway.

"Then let's have something definite from *you*!" she challenged him affectionately. "You don't mean—you don't mean to say that you've written about settlements to his father."

"I certainly wrote," Mr Greville said, "as soon as I'd had time to consider what it was my duty to do—about a couple of months after you had told me of your engagement and when I'd had the chance to satisfy myself that—that Don was not entirely un-presentable."

Eleanor said:

"I shall kiss you because you call him Don. It means that you are not going to be very horrid."

"It means that you *do* accept me," Don uttered joyfully.

"I wrote," Mr Greville said, when he once more emerged from his daughter's embrace, "to Mr Charles Collar Kelleg and asked him what settlements he proposed to make upon the occasion of his son's marriage with my daughter."

"How *could* you?" Eleanor said, but her reasonable nature, which was so like his, coming almost immediately to her rescue, she added in the same breath: "But of course it is exactly what you *ought* to have done."

"I understood," Mr Greville said, "that Don had from his mother an income of about two hundred a year invested in English railways. He made about another two hundred a year by illustrating stories in magazines. I told him that you had about as

much as Don from *your* mother's estate. And I gave him to understand that you might live comfortably and decently upon twelve hundred a year as a certainty. I was ready to secure my daughter, after my death, another four hundred a year if he was prepared to do the same for his son. I told him that large incomes are rather a curse than the reverse in this country. Of course Don might go on making money by illustrations. But he's not very persevering and magazines are precarious things to have to do with."

"What in the world," Eleanor asked Don, "would your father have thought at receiving such a letter?"

"Oh, heavens," Don said, "there is not the least means of knowing. I guess he'll have liked it though, if he wasn't in one of his spread-eagling fits when everything English was hell to him." He stuck his head on one side. "But no: I'm pretty certain he'd like *any* straight business proposition."

"He answered in about twelve words upon his business paper, written by a typewriter," Mr Greville continued.

"But *what*?" Eleanor asked. Mr Greville erected his head to make an effort of memory.

"His exact words were: 'Dear Sir: I shall leave my son all my enterprises. But I think he's got too much conscience to make a good husband or anything else. He'll worry your daughter to death.'"

Eleanor let forth a long peal of laughter.

"Well, that's a prophecy!" Don said slowly. "My father was not so muddy witted."

"Oh, you think about yourself a great deal too much," Eleanor soothed him. "It's all *rot*!"

Mr Greville appeared to be reflecting absently and deeply.

"In return," he finally continued, "I wrote to Mr Kelleg that, considering the transient nature of American fortunes, I should infinitely prefer him to settle a definite four hundred a year in English Consols."

Eleanor interjected:

"Oh, I say!" Mr Greville faced her then: he had been looking at young Kelleg.

"I did not mean to say that he wasn't to leave your *fiancé* his interests too," he said, "but I wanted to secure something definite."

"I knew what you meant," his daughter said. "I wasn't afraid you would not do your best for us. I was thinking of Mr Kelleg's feelings."

"My dear child"—Don himself had a flash of inspiration—"your father's point of view was just right. If my father was a reasonable man his feelings would not be hurt by *your* father's doing his best for you. If he was not a reasonable man his feelings, in Mr Greville's eyes, would not matter a cent."

Mr Greville moved his head rigidly up and down.

"I've exactly hit it," Don appealed to him. "And of course my father would not mind. It's the sort of thing he'd have to put up with every day over there. Distrust! Obviously no one ever trusted him except when they had to. And he'd never trust anybody but the sort of person he'd think a fool." He leant his head back against the

sofa cushions with a little air of being deserted now that Eleanor had gone over to her father's side of the room. "After all," he uttered, "the American business spirit in the matter of trustfulness is exactly that of the English lawyer. You do not trust anybody. You do not waste as much time over seals and tape (an English lawyer would not if it were not the way he made his money), but you put a mighty deal of mistrust into a half sheet of notepaper. And there's a deal of a million dollars concluded."

He was proceeding to speculate upon how this state of mind had arisen in the Transatlantic continent when he suddenly pulled himself up with:

"But I was trying to tell you my past—and to find out what my future's likely to be!" He looked appealingly at Mr Greville. "*Do*," he said, "tell us what my past has been. You do it so much better than I. Let us hear something definite."

At this appeal Mr Greville did take the matter in hand. Having paused for precisely two minutes by the solemn clock at his back he then had the subject as well arranged in his head as would have been one of his reviews of a contemporary book. In the meanwhile Eleanor had had time to think that Don really *was* too self-conscious. A man *ought* not to be so much aware of his own mental attitudes. It was not exactly healthy. And she had a vague sense that she must work him out of the habit and a vague sense that that employment would afford her in the future many delightful opportunities for intimate self-revelations—for those splendid "You's" and

“ I’s ” that are, after all, the very food and staple of all love-scenes.

“ I had ”—Mr Greville commenced his review of the situation—“ two things to settle in my mind: the first, whether this young man was materially fitted to support my daughter: the second, whether he was altogether sane and of well-formed character. As to the first you have heard part of what I did. I wrote to Mr Kelleg those two letters. One asked him what he intended to do for his son; upon his replying that he intended to leave all his ‘ interests ’ to Don, I replied that I should prefer him to put at least a small portion of it immediately into Consols so that his son should be certain of a sure income. Mr Kelleg’s reply to that letter was in these words: ‘ I don’t see what my son has done for me. Why should I give him up part of my capital? He has not been son enough for me to want to assure him peace of mind for ever in England.’ ”

At this point Don leaned eagerly forward. He was about to offer a long comment. But when Mr Greville paused to let him speak, he seemed, to Eleanor’s eyes, to check himself violently, and her father, having waited for a sufficient interval, took up his own tale again.

He had replied to Mr Kelleg’s second letter that he himself was not interested in his prospective son-in-law’s peace of mind, but he was in his daughter’s. He proposed that Mr Kelleg should settle upon Eleanor just the sum that he himself was prepared to settle at his death—about four hundred pounds a year. Mr Kelleg had replied that that seemed a

pretty square proposition, but he did not see why he should be concerned for Mr Greville's daughter's peace of mind. If she wanted his son she might take him with all his disadvantages.

"But he added in a postscript"—Mr Greville concluded this part of his review—"that he'd see that Eleanor *should* be properly provided for, quite outside any fluctuations of his or his son's fortunes." He said that, for fear the matter might slip his memory, he'd already put into proper hands a sum of money—he did not say how much—for the benefit of Eleanor."

It was at this point that Eleanor made her protest.

"Don't you think," she said to her father, "that you ought to have spoken to me before putting me upon the market?"

"Don't you think," Mr Greville asked, "that you ought to have spoken to me before falling in love?"

"But I couldn't *help* falling in love!"

"And I couldn't help being interested in your future," her father echoed her. "I've left you, as you'll allow, a perfect liberty to dispose of your share of your personality. But there is my share too."

His level and quite passionless tones indicated a so great depth of affection for his daughter that Don was moved to exclaim: "Bravo!"

And this indication of a fact that he had been indulging in a style of psychology—a style that was apparent even to Don, although, indeed, it was no more than a quite definite statement—this indication brought Mr Greville very sharply back to the necessity for sticking to definite things. He was quite con-

vinced that, when it came to psychological analysis, he was better at it than his young friend, but he was not for the moment in the least inclined to make even so much concession to his young friend as to show a man of his own dignity indulging in anything at all so trifling as psychological speculations.

"So that here"—he resumed his review—"we have two definite facts." Mr Collar Kelleg had announced his intention of leaving all his "interests" to Don: he had made, too, a deliberate statement that he had settled something—something probably handsome—upon Eleanor. ("I don't imagine the man was lying." Mr Greville put his reason for relying on Mr Kelleg's word. "He'd probably not have an imagination that went beyond trying to surprise me with his generosity.")

Upon the whole this relieved his doubts as to the pecuniary future of Eleanor and Don. There remained the question of the young man's mental and moral fitness for partnership with his daughter. And Mr Greville once more unfolded his arms and, placing his knuckles upon his knees, surveyed the young man with direfully piercing eyes that, nevertheless, hardly saw the American's face.

"Oh, don't be very hard on Don," Eleanor said.

"My dear," Mr Greville said, "if I were going to be *very* hard on Don I should not be sitting here. I trust I'm always polite."

"You're always frightfully just," Eleanor said. "No doubt that's true politeness."

"What has always alarmed me"—Mr Greville ignored her interruption—"what has always made

me uncomfortable in dealing with American . . . manifestations is the American's singular want of system. And it has struck me—it struck me at the very first when I made Don's acquaintance—that he had a remarkably developed moral sense. I've noticed on several occasions that he's been unreasonably kind . . . ”

“He's much too kind,” Eleanor said, and Mr Greville uttered the solitary word:

“Precisely! ”

“And that means,” he pursued triumphantly, “that he hasn't any kind of system in his morality.” He turned definitely upon Don. “You can't get through life like that! ” he said seriously and with an air of shaking his head ever so minutely.

“You mean,” Don said, “that Eleanor will never know where to have me? ”

“That's what your father means,” Mr Greville answered, “when he says that you'll make Eleanor unhappy. I think you will myself,” he added. “Eleanor's *my* daughter—and I know you'd give me the fidgets if I had much to do with you.”

Don said: “Oh! ” in a grievous tone.

“The only chance,” Mr Greville pursued compassionately, “is that you may develop a backbone under her hands. After all you aren't American. Your father was not, neither was your mother. Your father obviously had character enough. I've studied his history carefully and I've discovered that . . . Oh! ” he turned upon Eleanor, “I haven't been employing detectives to look up the career of Mr Kelleg. But I *have* subscribed to a

press-cutting agency. The American magazines are full of biographies of Mr Kelleg, and portraits, and demands for his indictment or suggestions for raising temples to him as *the* representative of the American frame of mind." He turned his sharp features again upon the young man. "It is astonishing how equally they're divided in opinions. I've collected 642 cuttings relating to your father. Of these, 340 clamour for his indictment and 302 eulogise his calmness in 'crises.' "

"Well I guess," Don said, "he hadn't any nerves at all. I have heard him talking to my mother, who *was* a formidable proposition."

"I'll get you," Mr Greville said, "to resume your own biography in a minute. In the meantime I'll just put the dots upon some of your I's." He paused to recollect himself.

"You *were* born in Idaho. You *did* go to Hut, Montana. You *did* spend most of your time, very possibly, in the shop of a German barber."

Don said: "Well, it's fine to be corroborated! "

"The barber's name was Kratzenstein," Mr Greville said. "And he was your father's most intimate friend. And it was he that your father relieved of the Great Cevanza Mine."

Don leapt to his feet.

"By Jove," he said, "the very first thing I've got to do is to make some sort of restoration to Kratzenstein."

Mr Greville's face assumed a remote air of disfavour and even Eleanor said:

"But surely there are more urgent things."

"Only think of poor Kratzenstein!" Don said, "waiting for all these years."

"We shall never get anywhere at this rate," Mr Greville said, and he positively turned his head to look at the clock. Don was instantly full of contrition.

"Oh, let me get on with my biography," he said. "I'll be ever so short." And he hurried out a great many facts. When his mother had separated from his father she had taken him to Bournemouth. That was because the children of her former master, the O'Something Don, had gone to a private school at Bournemouth. She wanted her son to become a gentleman—like the young Something Dons. He had done very well at the private school: he had had the time of his life too. When he was fourteen his mother had made a last attempt to live again with her husband. His father had come over from the States: they had travelled in a desultory way half over Europe, his mother quarrelling with his father all the way. Don had had a private allowance of fifty dollars a week and permission to buy anything that he wanted in Rome, Paris or Vienna. It seemed to him that there had not been a single thing he wanted in Rome or Paris. In Vienna he had wanted to buy a dancing gipsy to travel with them. But his mother had not allowed it. When they got back to New York his father had begun to build his famous palace, No. 1912 Fifth Avenue. And whilst it was in the building they had lived in a great hotel. They had had the whole of the first floor. *That* time Don considered to have been the most miserable he

had ever spent. He had had no one to play with but the bell-boys and lift-attendants in the great, marble lounges. And the lift-boys had always been too busy to play any decent game. In the middle they would be called away to whirl up to the twenty-third floor. He could not, he said, to that day see a lift going up in a hotel without feeling miserable—so many of his games had been spoiled. At last his father had hired lift-boys to do nothing but play with him. Then he had discovered that he did not like lift-boys.

And his father and mother had quarrelled incessantly. At least his mother had upbraided his father all day long: his father had always seemed to sit still with a twinkling smile and to catch his mother out in passionately-inaccurate statements.

“It was unbearable!” Don said. “At least I could not stand it. Our storey of the hotel was furnished with no stuff that had not belonged to Marie Antoinette! And those continual rows going on all the time!”

There had, at that time apparently, been another woman in the case—a Countess Canzano. Her husband did work for his father. But he remembered the Countess—a kind, delightful woman who could sit on the Marie Antoinette chairs and look comfortable and in place! He liked her very much. . . . And finally his mother had become pettish with him too.

There had come a day when he simply *could not* stand it any longer.

“I could not: I *could not*!” he said, full of emotion. He had had but one idea, to get back to Bournemouth.

His mother would not come away. She had said that it was her duty to defend *his* interests against the Countess. So he had run off. "There wasn't any heroism in it," he said, "it was simply running away from something intolerable to something that could not possibly be worse." He had stowed himself away on board a cattle-liner—with one of the lift-boys, who had wanted to run away too and who had showed him how to do it.

"It was not a bad time that," Don said. "Some of the cattle hands belted us: some were quite decent and showed us how to catch the birds that live in the holds on the steers' backs. Little chaps with dabs of yellow on their heads, like fire." He added the inconsequential detail that he still remembered the *Minnehaha* whenever he smelt a stable, and that he seemed to smell a stable whenever he saw a golden-crested wren.

But he had arrived at Bournemouth: the proprietors of the private school there had taken him in with a kindness that he had considered to be romantic—until, as years went on, he had argued out the fact that they, too, must have known that he was the son of one of the richest men on earth.

"There is not, I suppose, anything romantic in the world," Don commenced to speculate. "It is odd. On the face of it my running away on a cattle-ship was romantic. Actually it was not. It was just necessity . . ."

"Your mother eventually rejoined you in Bournemouth?" The sharp tones of Mr Greville cut into his rather dreamy drawl.

Don drew himself together and, unwillingly enough, resumed his dutifully direct narration.

His mother *had* rejoined him at Bournemouth. She had given up the struggle with the Countess—she had, in fact, divorced her husband, but she had not done so very well out of it. Mr Kelleg had had to make her an allowance, not absolutely princely. She had wanted to do things in the style of an English lady because she wanted her son to have the upbringing of an English gentleman. She had kept rather a good house—she knew how, because she had been a lady's-maid in rather a good house—and she wanted him to be able to bring home his young friends from Harrow and Oxford.

“I suppose it was not much good to try to make me *exactly* that sort,” Don said. “*I* wanted to be an artist—there were æsthetic chaps at New College in my day. *She* wanted me to go into Parliament. She would, of course. I probably should have,” he continued. “I should have been some nice, friendly chap's nice, friendly private secretary at this moment, I daresay, if she'd lived.”

He sighed for a moment, regretting perhaps that he had not been forced into those disciplined and ordered paths. For the father of Oxley, who had been his special chum at Harrow, was now Postmaster-General, and who knows However, he had been set on being an artist. It was, after all, the visual side of things that always appealed to him—or rather, he corrected himself, it was the psychological, the poetic atmosphere suggested by anything that he saw.

"For instance," he said, pointing at Mr Greville, "when I look at you it almost invariably suggests to my mind—" But he drew himself together suddenly and closed the digression with: "I wish you'd let me make a study of your head. It's so tremendously characteristic!"

Mr Greville rigidified the muscles of his neck as if he hardly knew what to do with that compliment, and Eleanor stroked his hand to give him patience.

"Yes," he said grimly, "I suppose that has always been your trouble—the fact that you cannot stick to the point."

"It does seem as if I never *shall* settle what I'm going to *do*," Don uttered plaintively. "And yet, Heaven knows, time presses. My boat—a boat—leaves on the 16th and that's only six days from now."

"I shall finish my book to-night," Mr Greville said, as if he were announcing that his tailor would be sending him home a suit, and whilst Eleanor, with a little gasp of compunction, was actually saying:

"Oh, *how* I've neglected you lately! I thought you were *months* off the end of it!" he brought out in the same monotonous tones:

"I don't see why we can't get our packing done in the five days that will leave us."

IV

IT was into the flurry of thought caused by this tremendous announcement that Mr Augustus Greville's dark, small, delicately-made and querulous figure was suddenly introduced. Because he disliked ceremony of any kind he greeted no one with more than a nod, although he had just made the journey down from town, and had not seen either his uncle or Don Kelleg for quite a number of months. He walked determinedly to the fireplace, turned smartly on his little polished heels, and, his hands encumbered by his bowler hat, brown gloves and thin, silver-mounted cane, said with an aggrieved air that no girls, nowadays, seemed to *want* to get married.

Mr Greville rose stiffly to his feet.

"I gather, Augustus," he uttered, and he carefully averted his face from the young man, "that some of your female clients have proved insusceptible to your charms."

"Insusceptible!" Augustus met his formidable uncle with saturnine impatience. "I've spent the whole morning—the *whole* morning—in a Shoreditch County Court with two nice girls."

"Two nice, fair, well-brought-up girls!" he repeated, as though indeed the times were out of joint.

"We'll finish that discussion in my study." Mr Greville addressed the gently fidgeting Don. "Now, at once." And with his instinct for courtesy he threw over his shoulder to the ruffled Augustus: "I do not see what more a rising young solicitor can want." And with his afterthought of kindness he turned round to say to Eleanor, who, in her eagerness, had stretched forth her hands to balance herself for rising from her chair:

"We shan't settle upon anything you won't like, my dear."

"Then I shall go too," Eleanor informed him pleadingly, as he laid his large, long, scholar's hand upon Don's shoulder to conduct him from the room.

"The trouble was," Augustus Greville threw at the black tails of his uncle's frock coat, "that they *would not* philander with me."

"Or with any other man," he added in a lower voice, for the door had closed, without noise, but peremptorily.

Eleanor made swift reflections whilst her cousin caressed his drooping, silky moustache—he had laid his hat, stick and gloves upon the dining-table. Its long, fine, black hair drooped downwards, like a tuft of maidenhair fern, and, veiling his little mouth, it masked his expression, or added, with its droop, to his air of gloom.

"He's thinking of going to America!" Eleanor uttered to herself. "But why?" For if Mr Greville was thinking of a thing he was certain to have unanswerable reasons. The things that he did appeared at times incredible. She could not, ten

minutes before, more easily have imagined her friend the Canon preaching a sermon against the Thirty-Nine Articles. But now he was going to do it! Then there must be excellent reasons. It might be merely the desire to see the Thing with his own eyes. She remembered that he had once, for a week, gone to stay with a quite incredible Lady Felix, during a shoot, where they played kiss-in-the-ring in the drawing-room at one at night. He had wanted to see, then, with his own eyes, though it had appeared wildly unthinkable before. Or he might merely want to guide Don Kelleg. Don certainly needed a guide. Or he might merely want a change. You could not imagine a change more complete.

So she remained, lost between amazement at her father's action—between that and a perfect trust in the sanity of his motives—whilst her cousin talked about the two girls in the Shoreditch County Court. They *were* quite nice girls, he kept on in his aggrieved monotone: their people were good people. But what did they do? Look after their homes; marry, or anything of the sort? Not at all. They ran a Woman's Trade Union Federation in the interests of match-girls. There were about twenty nice girls interested in *that* thing. That was what they were about in Shoreditch—a sweating employer had got a girl as apprentice on iniquitous terms. Well, he'd so arranged the case that the Judge called for a pair of scissors and cut up the deed of apprenticeship. But was *that* the sort of thing for nice girls to be employed on?

Eleanor came out of her reverie about the American

voyage for a sufficient interval to keep the conversation decently rolling. Did he, she asked negligently, talk to his clients, the Woman's T.U.F., in that way?

He gave one of his sudden, surprisingly radiant and sweet smiles that she liked so much in him—a smile that made her think, half wistfully, that if the right woman *had* got hold of him his petulant expression—what they called in the family the scowl that wouldn't come off—would never have appeared on his face at all. But poor Augustus had been so crushed in his youth by his father, the intolerable Bishop, and so worried in his after youth by his mother, who still, after his father's death, had kept, as it were, the great verbose spirit of his father as an immense wet blanket for ever before his eyes, that now at thirty-three, whilst he was still a baby he was also a perpetually mutinous old man. He had all the spirit and ideal of extreme youth together with the old man's—and particularly the old clergyman's—habit of ineffectually bewailing the disjointedness of his time.

And whilst, still smiling, he told her that it was not of course a solicitor's duty to express to his clients his views of the Activity of Women and their "proper Fields," any more than it was his duty to explain to his client, the R.C. Bishop of Chichester, what he thought of "Rome," because it was his business to get a practice, and his business lay mostly with Federations and Societies and the Trustees of Roman Catholic Dioceses, who, by-the-bye, did want a deuce of a lot of interest on their

investments . . . whilst he was explaining to her, in fact, that he was uncommonly *éveillé* and acute as a solicitor, she was wondering what he would have been like by now if she had accepted him the first time he had proposed to her. He had, indeed, in his negligent, gloomy and aggrieved manner, proposed to her since then innumerable times; practically he had said, "Look here: why don't you marry me?" every time they had met for the last ten years. She had not ever been very certain of his seriousness: she had not much troubled about it at all. Only from the fact that he had not, latterly, come near them at all, and from the other fact that her Aunt Emmeline occasionally let drop some of her winged shafts against the "inexplicable conceit of poor Eleanor," had she been able to gather that her refusals really rankled. Aunt Emmeline, of course, had, when they were *quite* young, always kept a watchful eye upon them: she did not, she said, approve of the marriage of cousins, and she had never, after they were seventeen, allowed them to, say, skate alone together. But of course, in those days, Augustus was the son of a real, live—and very roaring—Bishop: since then he had become the son only of a remarkably extinct volcano, with a mother who, having rendered herself impossible to all the inhabitants of their "Close," had come to living in a villa—if a very big villa—at Reading, from whence it was poor Augustus's fate to run daily up to town like a blackbird let out at regular intervals to the length of a very short piece of string. But though Aunt Emmeline might really object to the

marriage of cousins it was pretty certain that she would object still more to the refusal, by a cousin, of *her* son.

It would not much have surprised her if, at that moment, he had said once more: "Look here: why don't you marry me?" in his tones which were half masterful and half querulous. Instead his, "Look here!"—for he *did* utter the words—was followed by:

"Is that man dead?"

And it brought her sharply back to the fact that she did not really know whether Mr Collar Kelleg, in his distant and unrealisable city across the water—whether he were actually dead. It was what you would call a moral certainty that he was. But she felt that she would never be actually—as you might say, physically—certain unless she had actually touched his corpse. She answered him, however, with:

"Have *you* been speculating?"

He answered quickly:

"God forbid!" as if the mere suspicion were one more insult.

"Then why," she asked him, "are you so frightfully anxious to know? You came all the way down from town yesterday to ask: and you've come again to-day."

He replied only:

"It is not at all the sort of thing that I should have to do with."

She quite realised that the minute shrug attending his words was as much as to say: "You've engaged yourself to this man. You cannot expect to have

my confidences as you used to." For she had followed the building up of his practice from the very youngest days, when he had been employed by a great and respectable firm of conveyancers, to the day when, with a small but reputable band of clients of his own, he had launched his own little boat. With each new client he had, as it were, bidden her, imperiously, to rejoice—and, in a gentle way, she had rejoiced. He had always "proposed" when he got a new client too.

She was not, however, going to accept his rebuff. It seemed ridiculous that he should want to shut her out merely because she was going to marry Don—for it would not, that event, in the least affect her accessibility to *him*. There never had been a time when she would not have burst out laughing at the very idea of it. As she put it to herself: one would not marry Oggie any more than one would marry one's brother or one's spaniel.

"Not at *all* the sort of thing," Augustus repeated, referring still to the idea that *he* should speculate in the enterprises of Mr Charles Collar Kelleg.

"Oh, well, Oggie," she said, "such extraordinary people do seem to have speculated . . ."

She had in her mind her Aunt Emmeline, and he, who much dreaded that his mother—she kept a flintily hard hand upon her own purse-strings—might be the person she had in mind, asked swiftly:

"Whom d'you mean?"

Her own "No one in particular"—for it was not her business to give away her aunt—had all the effect that she had intended—the effect of making

him think that it was ridiculous that there should be secrets between cousins. And she held out to him an olive branch by saying:

"Everyone I know seems to have been dabbling—I dare not go near Canon Dearmer's, for instance."

He smiled at that confidence, and in a grateful return gave her his own—for it pained him to keep a wall up against her if he could decently throw it down.

"They do it on both sides, then," he said.

"Ah, it's your clients you're concerned for!" She took his meaning. "The Very Reverend ones!"

He made a little gesture with his noticeably delicate, pale, dark hands.

"*My friends*," he said, "think that assuredly Providence will be on their side in the stock market. They think—they really seem to think—that the saints or archangels will contrive to bull their shares."

"I cannot imagine the poor dear Canon thinking anything but that his gambling is sin," Eleanor retorted. "He's probably dreadfully ashamed of doing it."

"There's the difference," Augustus chimed in, "that your Canon does it to enrich himself. *My* clients do it for the furtherance of their Faith." The communion with Eleanor, upon any terms, thawed him swiftly, and the details of his predication came out of him now in a rush. She listened so well: she was so receptive and yet she was not, as he put it, any sort of a humbug. It was not, however, what he got out of her, but the manner in which he got things out of himself, that made him

think that he never enjoyed anything so much in life as talking to Eleanor.

"It's like this," he said: "the late Mr—it does not matter about his name—left a certain sum towards building a church and a mission in a place where there are a number of Irish factory hands. This sum was left to the Bishop and trustees to hold in trust till sufficient money had been raised by subscription to complete the whole thing." Augustus had been made the solicitor to this Trust, mainly because, although he was the son of an Anglican Bishop—a Bishop particularly hostile to the other persuasion—he had managed to help one of the other Bishop's trustees to several very profitable investments. "They'd prefer," Augustus said, "a solicitor of their own persuasion, but it's one of their maxims, you know, that the godly grow fat at the expense of the unrighteous." And Sir George—the trustee in question—had persuaded the Monsignor to come to Augustus for advice. The Monsignor—a foreign prelate—had revealed to Augustus a mind of a wholly pleasing *naïveté*. He had said to Augustus that there certainly existed in the world of stocks and shares certain things that would increase any given sum of money tenfold without the motion of a hand. It was true that the original money was sometimes lost; but with Providence on one's side—and Providence was very good to them—the idea of loss might be negatived. He wanted the Church and Mission money invested in one of these securities.

And Augustus had suggested that they should follow the fortunes of Charles Collar Kelleg. They

were the *sort* of thing, those papers, and he hoped to get some tips occasionally from Eleanor. He did not say that he had never really believed that Don was as much estranged from his father as he and Eleanor had pretended. "But now," he said, "Kellegs are falling as if the bottom had come out of a bucket. And they're saying in the City that Kelleg committed suicide."

It came into Eleanor's head to wonder how in the world "in the City" they had already come to say that. For the rumour was not to have been spread abroad by Kelleg's agent till the Monday. Or it might have been the Saturday. She could not precisely remember the day mentioned in the cable: but it was some days ahead still. She said:

"I don't see how it'll affect *your* pocket. It's only the Catholics who will lose."

"My dear child," he said sententiously, "it will make all the difference in the world to my pocket."

She wondered for a moment and then said:

"But surely a solicitor is not responsible for money a client loses."

He said darkly:

"That's it. You always remember that I'm a solicitor. You forget that I'm a gentleman too," and she knew that his tone meant: "That's why you've always refused to marry me."

"Oh dear," she said, "the trouble's always been that I forget you're a solicitor. You're much more like a big baby when you get on the high horse."

He choked angrily for a moment, and then remembered that you could not expect from a member

of your family the aloof politeness that you ought to receive from the rest of the world.

"This is intimacy," he said bitterly.

"Oh, Oggie," she said quickly, "I wish you weren't so sensitive. One always forgets that you haven't grown out of it."

"You always forget that I'm in love with you," he answered grimly.

It bobbed up so quickly that, to retain her self-possession, she could not say anything better than:

"I've never been in the least sure of it!" But she had mastered her desire to laugh—a discourtesy that would have shocked her father's daughter—sufficiently to add: "And of course, in that case the less I go out of my way to spare your feelings the better."

"For us both?" he asked saturninely.

"For you," she rejoined determinedly.

"Then perhaps you'll explain," he said, with a business-like disagreeableness, "why you say I'm more like a baby than a solicitor."

She told him—to show him that she did not fear that he'd resent it enough to break with her—that he could not in the least withstand his infantile tempers. He could be shrewd enough whilst he kept collected. Take this case in point: there was not the least moral call upon him to guarantee the Bishop from loss. On his own showing the Monsignor had wanted a gamble—well, Augustus had given him a gamble for his money. But at the suggestion that he should let the church and mission suffer, Augustus got on his high horse and said he was a gentleman!

"Well, I am," Augustus said. "It was a moral duty in me to advise the Bishop against chucking his money away. I let him do it. If I cannot discover whether this chap's dead—if I cannot discover it in time and he *is* dead—I shall consider myself as in honour bound to pay the money back out of my own pocket."

"My dear Oggie," she said sharply, "I doubt whether you're a gentleman at all. I really do."

And at his gasp of outraged astonishment she went on:

"It's romantic, what you propose to do. And a gentleman is never romantic. It isn't fair to others. It's not fair even to the Bishop. He needs a lesson, and if you stand between him and his lesson you're doing him no end of harm." She felt that she spoke with the robust commonsense of her Tory father: she knew that she was perfectly right and speaking like a man, not a woman. "It's a gentleman's business—it's a decent man's business—to be normal. You've got to play the game and do what's expected of you; anything else is not fair."

She wished that Don had ever given her occasion to advise him, as she could always advise Augustus. But Don's problems were always too nebulous for her: he was not a person who gave way to passion: he was always, on the contrary, giving way to scruples.

"I wonder," Augustus sneered, "that you do not ask me why I should 'throw away my money.' Upon my word, at times you speak just like a desiccated solicitor yourself."

"Well, I hope I've got some commonsense." She answered his gibe composedly.

"Oh, you've got a little, for a woman," he said, "but you haven't a grain of imagination—any more than any other solicitor."

He smiled deviously and continued:

"I'm not such a fool as you think," he said. "I've got it in my head to play the game of getting together a large practice. And I shan't do it if, like one of your sort of dry practitioner, I cut my client's losses—especially if he's the first client of a large and unbusiness-like class."

He looked at her with a little perky air of triumph at the close of this speech. For his little "game" was simply this: that if he indemnified his Bishop against loss when all the world, very markedly, was losing its all, he would, in the little, reverberating, gossiping hill of that communion in England, attract to himself the faith—and the custom—of half a dozen, a dozen, a score—nay, of every Bishop in England. "For they're all the same," he concluded, "desperately greedy—or desperately in need of funds if you like."

He opened his lips again to shoot at her:

"So I'm not the fool you take me for and, in the language of your bridegroom, it's up to you. I score one."

"Oh," she said amiably, "if it's a question of cadging for business it's all the way up to me. I thought it was a question of a gentleman."

A sudden gloom had descended upon him though he had not listened to her retort. He raised his

head suddenly to bring out, with a good deal of passion:

"Look here, Ellie, do the decent thing. Give me a pointer. I've insured at Lloyd's against the chances of the Bishop's loss. But it'll cripple me to keep up the premiums. I can't do it at the pace. You can take my word for it that I won't use the knowledge to make any movements in the market. But just save me personally."

The deeply-pleading note of his voice, his dark, searching eyes, his graceful, small presence that seemed to move into sympathy with his words—his whole atmosphere and her remembrances of which he made so large and innocent a part, moved her deeply.

"I can't do it, Oggie," she said—and she remembered when she had run to help him land a huge conger, on Deal pier, on a wet, blowy day twenty years ago.

"If I lose the Bishop and the chances of what he'll bring me," he pleaded on, "I may as well shut up shop."

"Ask Don himself," she said in a low voice, and her eyes wandered to the table. The private cable that she and Don had read together an hour before lay creased and blurred where her father had left it after perusing it.

"That sentimental ass!" he said negligently, and resumed his deeper tone with:

"Look here, Ellie." He stumbled and halted and then went on. "It's not the money. It's the—the—my theory—my idea of how a practice is to be

made. I've had to back my own ideas—I haven't gone on in the old humdrum way. I've told no end of the old, conveyancing, horn-spectacled dodgers that they're fools. If I have to shut up shop mother will keep me: I shan't starve. . . . But . . .” and a minute shudder of violence went all over his dark being, “those other beggars will laugh at me, I won't stand it. By God, I won't stand it . . .”

His eyes went to the paper, towards which her hand was already reaching out. From where he stood he could read, positively, the first words: “Mr Charles Collar Kelleg . . .” and with a deep, sudden passion his hand raced hers for it. She sank back in her chair nervelessly and without it. His sigh was almost like a sob and he held it close to his eyes, with a cat-like fierceness, for he had inherited the shortness of sight of her father's family. His head in a minute came up from his reading, his eyes sought her face, dilated and wide-lidded.

“By heaven!” he said. “What a scheme! I can make a hundred thousand if I'm cautious.”

She said, as if now she sought guidance from him—as if, in her grief, she were asking him how far a man—who *must* in the end know more of what a gentleman could do—how far a man *could* go—just the one word:

“Oggie!”

He answered a non-comprehending:

“Well?” and then slowly he folded the piece of paper into a little strip.

“Yes,” he said slowly, “of course it comes to that.

If you do not feel inclined to give me the pointer I haven't read this precious message."

She said, with pauses between each word:

"I only half understand. What do you mean?"

"I mean," he said, with a deep bitterness, "that if you don't care enough to tell me—knowing that I shall be ruined—if you don't care enough to say that you'd have told me in any case, I don't care enough about life to use the knowledge the paper has given me."

"You mean that you're too decent a man," she said. "Say that that's what you mean."

"I don't mean anything of the sort," he said pitilessly. "Your American's fair game, papers and all. If a man's fool enough to leave such a paper on a table he's . . ." He stopped and said: "I mean literally that if you do not care for me—at least enough to save me from ruin—I don't care enough about life to keep my end up."

"You're asking me, in fact, for permission to use your knowledge," she uttered.

"Look here," he said, and she knew that the moment for his stereotyped form of words had come, "why don't you marry me?" He went on swiftly: "I can make enough with this to keep us for ever and ever. You can make what you like out of me. You know it. You cannot make a man out of that—that sponge. You *can't* marry him. You *can't*. He's like the tameest sort of cat. He's an incredible ass. . . . Why, the other day I was walking up Buckingham Street with him and a loafer came and offered him a box of matches—one of those wastrels

that ought to be hanged: one of the curses of the day. And what did your Don say to him?—‘No, I thank you!’” Augustus spurted out the words with a bitter contempt. “He’s polite: he’s sweet, like that, to the very pests, the cancers of Society. You cannot marry such a man. Not *you*! You!”

“Why don’t you marry me?” he repeated, “why—don’t—you—marry—me?”

It was whilst the words were vibrating in the air that Don came smiling into the room. He had, in her eyes, an air of blind greatness, a vast, credulous benevolence that made him approach Augustus with his hand stretched out and the words:

“Who’s going to marry you?”

He had heard only the last two words.

And it was the feeling that he ought to be warned that there were traitors in the world that she brought out the words:

“Augustus has been reading the cable.”

But all the stress died out of the room with Don’s next words.

“Well, that’s famous, I was just going to tell him myself,” and Eleanor, with all her sense of sane equity, could not bring herself to explain to him, at least at that moment, precisely how overbearing and outside all bounds her cousin had been. Perhaps it relieved her to escape the necessity; at anyrate, next moment it was too late. For Don’s succeeding words were:

“It works out at this: we’re all going to New York, and Aunt Emmeline is to be of the company!”

And into the gasp that seemed to come to both of them he threw:

"Your father is of opinion"—he addressed himself to Eleanor—"that you need a chaperon. I tried to persuade him that those institutions aren't modern necessities. But he puts it that if you became ill—which he considers the likeliest thing in the world considering what American cooking is—it would be the most awkward thing in the world to have no other woman in the party." He waived, characteristically, their desire to know more facts by diverging into: "It's astonishing how your father can, in a common-sense way, prove that a convention is a convenience. Personally I'm all for kicking conventions overboard. But there it is: there's no doubt that in American hotels—for you cannot, he says, very decently quarter yourselves in any of *my* half-dozen palaces—the only decent servants are the negro bell-boys, who are not, obviously, adapted for waiting upon a sick lady. Which shows you, once more," he was continuing, "how the New World does redress . . ."

"But what's going to be *done*?" Eleanor asked, and for a moment she wished that her lover might at times dispense with his tremendous flow of words. "You forget that whilst you've been settling it with dad we've been sitting here."

Don's eloquent bronzed face expressed a sudden contrition and concern.

"It all seems so simple, now that your father's arranged it," he said, "that I've sort of got the impression it's so obviously the one thing to do—so

obviously, that of course you'd know it for yourselves!"

"I'm to go with you?" she asked. "Next Wednesday?" And whilst her mind quickly ran to preparations, he was answering:

"Oh, it's principally *you* that go. But there'll also be I and your father, and Augustus here as *my* chaperon, and your Aunt Emmeline as yours, and your father's man to valet Augustus and him, and your aunt's maid for her and you. Supposing of course that there's accommodation on the boat."

He added reflectively:

"Though, as the boats all practically belong to me, there doesn't seem to be much difficulty. For your father says—I don't know how he knows it—that *my* father always kept a sort of prior claim for himself on a suite of state-rooms for every boat of his lines . . ."

"It'll cost a tremendous lot of money," Eleanor said.

"Oh, money!" Don said vaguely. "It doesn't exist any more. There's nothing left for me but action."

And whilst she was wondering whether she could altogether like a state of things, a physical condition, in which, as it were, the force of gravity was left out and you just floated, he said himself:

"It's a most extraordinary feeling! It's as if you could fly and did not want to," so that Eleanor had a quick feeling of delight at their thoughts being so much in unison, as if, by mental telepathy, she had sent him that very image . . .

Augustus said:

"But surely Uncle Greville isn't going to let *you* pay for himself and Eleanor. Or has he too . . ."

For he could not think of his uncle as affected by such a cataclysm, though he felt its effects upon his own self. He knew, in his bones, that he too was going to fly—but his uncle was such a determined pedestrian.

"Oh," Don answered, "at the rate your uncle can come to resolutions we've had time to settle that too. *He* pays for Eleanor and himself and your mother and the servants. He'll do it because, with Eleanor so well 'settled,' from that point of view he can afford to sacrifice his economies of some years to his desire to see for himself what the place is like . . ."

Augustus said: "Ah!" His uncle certainly *was* a pedestrian. He disliked motor-cars: he would not bicycle: he did not keep a trap: he would not even sit down save when it was necessary—so you certainly could not think of him as flying with another man's wings in the face of the Tory proprieties.

"I guess," Don was going on, "that he would not approve of letting the fact that Eleanor was to be well settled help him to make an excursion if it wasn't that he thought I needed someone to give me backbone. What he takes from me in the one obligation he'll restore several hundredfold by saving me from making, as he thinks, an irrevocable ass of myself. I do not mean that he wants to keep me from making reparations . . ."

"Don dear," Eleanor interrupted him, "did dad say that you were to take Augustus?"

The fact that the conversation had, under Augustus's auspices, taken a monetary turn, shocked her sense of the proprieties—though she herself had provoked it. Money, in her scale of things, was a thing you *did not* talk about. You might say: "It would be too expensive!" But, once you had received the opinion that it would not, you did not, in well-arranged circles, proceed to discuss the shares of the expenditure. That settled itself because the people engaged were decent people; and she was so touched with coldness at Augustus's contribution to the discussion—he ought to have *known* her father would do the right thing!—that she was anxious even to indicate to Don that Augustus was not the person to take with them, though she saw what a tremendously "good thing" it would be for him if Don took him up. . . . She could not, moreover, conceive of her father as recommending his nephew as a solicitor or as a travelling companion for himself. Don, however, could not conceive of anybody else.

"Oh!" he answered her question. "Your father said that I must take a lawyer with me—not that the law of the United States is the same as ours—yours—but simply because I needed a trained intelligence. . . . No, he did not tell me to take Augustus: he told me to take my solicitor. And"—he put his hand upon Augustus's shoulder, a gesture that Eleanor felt to be wholly "American"—"Augustus *is* my solicitor."

Augustus was his solicitor: he had written, for Don, two solicitor's letters to two magazines owned by the same gentleman. The two magazines had

calmly appropriated two landscape illustrations that Don had exhibited at a Black and White exhibition. Don would not have worried about it if it had not been that the things had been so vilely reproduced. The proprietor of the magazines had replied that the mere advertisement of appearing in the *P*— and the *W*— ought to be payment enough for a person like Don. But Augustus's threat that his client would apply for an order to suppress the issues of the magazines had brought tumbling in two cheques for fifteen pounds—which Don really had not known what to do with—and a commission for further illustrations from the proprietor, who, if he did not like to be bested, conceived a tremendous respect for an artist who would care to stand up to *him*. A success so considerable—it was all the more considerable in Don's eyes in that the proprietor had given an assurance that *all* Don's subsequent work should be reproduced just exactly as Don desired—had filled poor Don with an immense respect for Augustus's powers. It *wasn't* everybody who could make a magazine proprietor careful as to reproductions.

This would not, perhaps, have mattered to Don so much if Don had not been a lonely soul and if Augustus had not been Eleanor's cousin. One might even go so far as to say that Don had invented the occasion of the lawyer's letters—he would not normally have bothered even about the bad reproduction—especially that he might come in contact with Eleanor's relation. He wanted relations: he wanted, with all his affections, a family feeling. And

if it was not that, in the least, that had made him fall in love with Eleanor—he had met her as a solitary figure when she had been living in lodgings in Paris to attend the L—— School of Design, so that she did not seem to have any relations at all—it was part of an added charm to find that she had so splendid and so typical—so comfortable—an atmosphere of belonging to a family. He had not himself, since his mother was dead and he had quarrelled with his father, the ghost of a person to feel affectionate towards: but on Eleanor's side he discovered he would be able to sink, as it were, luxuriously and warmly, into all sorts of connections. It did not matter that, as he gradually discovered, Eleanor had not very much opportunity to see the members of her father's and mother's family. She did not, indeed, seem ever very much inclined to make at all strenuous efforts to keep up these connections. She need not, as he put it, because she had such a tremendous wealth of them that as she had never known the lack—the feeling of being alone in the world—she could not be blamed for not feeling how precious the possession was. But there they were, hundreds and hundreds of aunts and cousins and uncles: and blood *is* thicker than water. He felt himself at last about to slip into place somewhere on the edge of a ring. He would not any more be without some sort of circle.

He would, in fact, have called Augustus “his solicitor” even if he had been the veriest of muffs. He had so much need of something that was “his” that he would have proclaimed Augustus one of the

most remarkable practitioners in England though Augustus had had nothing but a lack of opportunity. As it was it was splendid, because Augustus was solicitor to the Woman's T.U.F. and to the Diocese of —; and he had so efficiently conducted Don's own affairs. So that, with his general excitement, with the feeling that he had that it was necessary to act—then and there, under the very nose of Mr Greville, and actually under the eyes of Eleanor, Don irrevocably engaged Augustus to be his man of affairs.

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PART II

BETWEEN SHORES

I

THE waves beneath their eyes swayed out from the vessel's side; the sea was dark and metallic, like slate with white furrings. It was astonishing because the sky was an unbroken pale blue, and in the swept arch of the heavens the sun, hidden somewhere by the smoke stacks, had a sway unhindered by any cloud. It affected the girl hostilely, this hard surface, in spite of the pure white paint of the boat, in spite of the fresh feel of the air on her face, in spite of the *bouillon* in handleless cups, the neat dresses that filled all the nooks of the pleasant decks, in spite of the accent that made you laugh, because, faint as it mostly was, it was, undoubtedly, as all-pervading as the faint smell of tar that exhaled from every cranny of the immense boat.

The first bugle was sounded for dinner: the two blessed little intervals of their day had commenced; for though you never observed any noticeable change in their attire, and though they could not possibly have been any cleaner than they always were, they, all of them, except a pallid lady who was said to be "very ill," disappeared into their cabins to do, in half an hour, what Eleanor—it was, she was aware, inconsiderate to the stewards—con-

trived with deft swiftness to get done in five minutes after the second bugle "had gone." Don apparently did not "do" anything at all, for he was always discreetly in his chair opposite hers by the time that, swaying just a little to what was undoubtedly the inconsiderate motion of such an hotel, she made her way between the filled chairs.

But Don, apparently, never had any need to "do" anything. He was always astonishingly neat: in England, she remembered, he had always stood out, in this way, from all the other men she had known. Here, among what she could not help calling to herself his compatriots—though his mother had actually made him naturalise himself—he did not stand out at all. It was something that, there in the shadow of a slung boat in the sea air, puzzled her a little. It puzzled her even while Don talked, as he always was talking, in pleasant undertones, about things that she never very well remembered. Or rather, yes, when she brought her mind back to it, he was talking about what it would feel like to drown just where they were. The night before they had desultorily made out in the great gilt-bound volume of charts that was in the great gilt-and-white lady's drawing-room, that the sea there was 1400 fathoms deep—or 16,000 feet, or 1842 feet—or some number that did not convey anything to her, and at that moment Don was vaguely speculating as to how it would differ being drowned in that depth of water from being drowned in a pond. It must, he was of opinion, make an enormous psychological difference, to sink and sink. Whereas she simply felt that if

you drowned, you drowned, though she admitted the pleasantness of his allegories . . .

But what really occupied her mind was the riddle of his odd identity with all these other young men here. For here, somehow, he did not stand out—as Augustus certainly did. There were here perhaps seventy young Americans out of the 400 of their centre of the ship—seventy young men, all gentle, low-voiced, extremely well washed—you would not somehow call it well-groomed—and with uncreased coats rather long in the back. It was not that the coats were not made in Regent Street—they all were. But they had, precisely, an uncreased look; you could not tell why. It was not that they were extravagantly new; it was rather as if they had been built—built was precisely the word—for people who would never put them to any physical uses out of doors. And yet it was not that the young men never went out of doors or never indulged in violent exercise; for ten of those young men were returning—a college team—from competing with a Cambridge band of athletes; and two others, at least, had, as war correspondents, done quite astonishing things with rough-riders in some war. Nevertheless, Augustus, who could not tell one end of an oar from the other, who had never been on a horse, who hated cricket, never walked a yard if he could help it, and regarded footballers as “muddied oafs” who infinitely contributed to our national decay—Augustus gave the idea that he could punch all their heads by sheer force of passion. Don did not; yet Don had, she knew, pulled a very creditable oar in his college

eight and, tucked away somewhere amongst his other accomplishments, had the gift of shooting out all the pips of a five of spades at twenty feet with an army revolver—and Don stood over six foot in his stockings. Yet you never noticed him, unless you were in love with him, when, after breakfast and before dinner, he joined in the frenzied swift rush round the promenade deck.

The problem, not the fact, worried her a great deal: for, approaching as she did those new shores with a singular curiosity, she was anxious to discover what *were* the differences. She was not inclined to believe—at first she had not been—that she was going to trouble her head in the least about the differences. There were not, she had been ready to advance, any differences. The people would prove just Englishmen who rushed a little faster perhaps but who wanted much the same things.

But, in spite of herself, she was, she was aware, wondering all the time what made *her* feel different from anything she had ever felt before. She realised, of course, that she was, really, trying to make discoveries about her lover: she tried to think that he was not an American. But she felt, in spite of herself, that he certainly was what those people called an un-American American. He was voyaging, indeed, under the pseudonym of "Greville" and passed vaguely for her father's nephew. It was not Don that was in question. But the lady who sat at her elbow at meals—a dark person with an odd variety of German accent who spent all her summers in "Yurup"—had told her that another American,

who passed most of his years in Liverpool, was un-American. It was, apparently, undemocratic, if it was not absolutely unpatriotic, to have any ties at all with any of the several old countries that they all, now they were hastening towards Sandy Hook, affected contentedly to despise.

Don, therefore, was undemocratic and un-American. She felt, in her loyalty to him, that she would not have minded if he had been both. And yet he fitted in so well with all the others. And she felt so differently among them. She had been but two days on board and she tried to assure herself that it was the unfamiliarity of her surroundings—the private sitting-room with the vast-blossomed flowers, the yellow velvet with gold-work on it, the green marble wash-hand basin in her berth with its silver fittings, or the nickel handles of all kinds and shapes that her Aunt Emmeline in the next berth was perpetually straining her wrists to manipulate for improbable purposes. Her Aunt Emmeline had days of fads when she would not allow herself to be “waited on.” Or it might have been the fact of eating with 400 other people at once that made her feel strange . . .

But though she tried to assure herself that it was this, she was aware that it *was not*. What at bottom was strange was to be among 400 people and not to attract from any man any of the unsanctioned attention—*œillades* or mere droppings of the eyes—that anywhere else would have made her comfortably uncomfortable. Augustus, of course, was always eyeing her, but that did not count, and she

had, as it were, a definite prospect of a sort of loneliness that stretched out before her eyes. It *was* a loneliness, for somehow the women. . . . They were not. . . . They were . . .

She could not somehow size it up. When they came into the dining-room in crowds they *looked* all right: but when you took them in detail. . . . Perhaps it was only the voices, the accent. And yet it was not the accent—one had allowed for that. It was rather a sort of intonation—a faint something—a querulousness! That was it. They seemed all, always, to be complaining, not so much in words as in the tones of their voices. It reminded her—with a quite startling vividness—of ladies at home who could not get servants “to stay.” They did not interest her somehow: not any one of them made her feel the possibility that she would ever come to a thrill of intimacy. They had not the complexions: they certainly had not the voices: they had not the look in the eyes. *They could not ever be her rivals!*

It was that, to her astonishing discovery—for it came to her in a flash—that made her for many days drop entirely the habit of speculating as to her companions, and they sank for her to the almost permanent condition of moderately well-dressed automata. She did not care how they dressed: for the way they dressed would not certainly interest any man who could interest her: she did not care to hear about their friends, for they certainly would not be her friends; she did not care to hear their views of Europe and its cathedrals. It did not bother her to have to listen: they simply did not excite her

curiosity—not any one of them. And by this second of the very long days she had resigned herself, for all of the time that she could not have Don to herself, to a future of lying in the deck chairs and passing remarks about the weather, or the *bouillon*, or about who was ill . . .

It was from a reverie upon one of these subjects that Don aroused her, whilst they leant, before dinner, over the rail together, by offering her two cents for her thoughts. He dropped immediately into the digression that she'd have to get used to considering—over there—that though two cents was in value the equal of one penny, actually the Americans called a cent “a penny,” just as a good many of them called a quarter “a shilling”—so that she'd have to get used to considering that a shilling consisted of twenty-five pence. She answered that she did not suppose that she'd ever get used to anything of the sort. And why should she? She'd have him and her father, not to mention Augustus and Aunt Emmeline, to look after her. She did not suppose she'd ever have to come into contact with “It.”

He had a little touch of disappointment in his voice—of a deeper disappointment than she cared to have given him—as he said:

“Oh, I hope you'll take some of the problems seriously when you come to see.”

“But is not,” she said, “what we're going for, just to give you an opportunity to get rid of your father's affairs and to pay a good deal of money away to some poor people and then . . .?”

Their attention was mutually distracted by the

silvery, wedge-like form of a dolphin that, reduced by the height they were up to the apparent size of a mackerel, dived, in a swift curve, in the hurry of waters just below their noses . . .

"And then . . ." She took up her sentence again. "Then? Why, nothing. We go back and it will be all over."

With his hands upon the rail, swaying with the sway of the vessel, he considered this proposition for longer than he'd ever considered before any proposition of hers—for a space of time that appeared unnatural to her, considering how short were the precious minutes that were really theirs before the next bugle would blow.

"Isn't that it?" she asked at last that he might waste no more.

"That's *it*," he said at last. "But what you've got to consider is that to do the thing—conscientiously!—will be a thing that'll call for an immense study. It won't be—I don't want it to be if I can help it—and, if you approve . . ." His voice had in it an almost appealing note. "It won't be just selling a business—as you might sell a shop in the Marylebone High Street. We are not, in fact—you and I and your father and Augustus—going out to see how I may retire from business. We're going out as reformers."

"Dearest boy," she said, and a note of deep tenderness in her tone answered his pleading, "I'm not going to hinder you."

"I know, I know," he said gratefully. "But the whole point is—the point that worries me is that

you'll have to take an interest—you'll have at least to study the circumstances. You can't go in and out as we did this morning when we paid a visit to the emigrants' quarters. I've got to plunge right into this eighty millions of people as I might plunge into this water here. . . ." He waved his hands downwards. "Right down, to the very bottom almost. And if you *do* come with me, Heaven knows *when* we shall get out again."

This was, as Don would have called it, a proposition that, in turn, made Eleanor pause for a space during which they might have been carried a mile towards the invisible coasts. She met it seriously enough with:

"I'm ready to do anything that's really necessary." She was not, however, even in her most loyal moods, a person to encourage him in exacting boundless promises. "Wouldn't it be enough," she asked, "if you just shook the whole thing off? Is it really necessary to accept the responsibility?"

He did not pause at all with his answer.

"I told you at the very first that it wasn't a power given to me. It's a duty. I've got to do my best with these people . . ." He stopped to make the confession. "Coming into contact with so many of them has made me tremendously in earnest. I hear so many old phrases: I've got to face, at every word that I overhear, something that represents an old hope, an old inspiration. I've *got* to do something."

"You were not, you know," she said, "so exceedingly in earnest the Wednesday before last."

He rubbed his hand up his brow.

"Perhaps I was not," he said slowly. "But it *does* come back to me—the national feeling. I do not know where it comes from. Perhaps from the days when I played with the bell-boys in the hall of the hotel. I do not know where else. But . . ." He paused, and a look of positive appalment in his face overwhelmed her.

"My dear thing!" he brought out, "I've been dreadfully unfair to you. If you did not expect. . . . It's shameful," he said; "of course you could not expect that I'd drag you into such an affair."

To calm him she put her hand upon his where it rested on the rail, as she was in the habit of doing for her father in church when the sermon irritated him beyond bearing. But the contact did not calm Don. He looked up at the canvas screen of the bridge where, silhouetted against the pale sky, a man, bearded and blonde, with a gilt line round his cap, was holding at the moment a glass to his eye. His own, mechanically, followed its direction.

"There's a ship!" he uttered, and then: "Of course I can't turn the boat round—or I might perhaps, only it would be hard on the passengers. But the very minute we get to New York, if you wish it . . ."

"Dear!" she said, "don't you *understand*?"

He brought out, almost hysterically, it was so swift, a "Yes, but . . ."

"When I accepted you as my responsibility," she said, with an attempt at a smile to calm him, "I took you with all *your* responsibilities. I shan't funk the slums of New York when I come to them. Only . . ."

"Heavens," he interrupted, "it need not come to that!"

"Only"—she was determined to finish her speech—"I do not want you to assume more responsibilities than you've got to do for your peace of mind."

"My peace of mind is irrevocably bound up with yours and your comfort," he said. And she accepted the obvious sincerity of his speech in lieu of the kiss that she felt she had deserved.

"And mine's so entirely bound up in yours," she said, "that if I thought there was a single thing you felt you really ought to do, and if you did not do it for my sake, I should be irrevocably miserable."

The shrill notes of the second bugle made him move backwards from the rail.

"Only," she repeated, as they squeezed close together to enter the companion door at the stern end of the deck, "I *do* want you to make up your mind what *will* satisfy you."

"And you'll stand the racket?" he asked, supporting himself above her with a hand on the paneling as the slow pitch of the creaking vessel elevated him right above her coiled hair. "You are a brick." And she looked back and up at him with an ingenuous pleasure upon her fresh cheeks, so that they remained at gaze until, in revenge, the dropping sternwards of the ship made the stairway almost horizontal and brought her face up to his level. He did not kiss her even then because he was lost in the consideration of whether he *ought* to accept the sacrifice.

This problem occupied him during the greater part of dinner, inordinate though—the second dinner of the voyage being one upon which the resources of the kitchen were strained to show what, as against the competing lines, the ship could do—inordinate though the dinner proved in length to be. The problem of whether he ought really to take her with him any further accompanied him through the indifferent soup, the excellent oysters, the *hors d'œuvres*; it spoilt his appreciation of the *mousse* of Westphalian ham; it made him so inattentive to the needs of Aunt Emmeline that it was positively Augustus who had to reach across the table to fill her glass with Apollinaris. It cast such a blight, this problem, upon him that he would almost gladly have taken refuge in the belief that it was the motion of the vessel affecting his spirits. But he was too excellent a sailor, and in spite of his dejection his appetite was too good to let him have that solace. And almost he came to the conclusion, since the matter so much affected him, that that alone was proof that he ought not to bring Eleanor into contact, however willing, with his Responsibility.

He contrived to be dragged out of his brooding by hearing the lady at his elbow exclaim, in tones too triumphant for the most preoccupied to miss:

“Now, *there's* a great man.”

The remark was addressed to Mr Greville, who raised his thin, aquiline face and piercing eyes immediately opposite to her across the table. And Don, in spite of his preoccupation, was subconsci-

ously aware that the subject of her eulogy was his own father.

Mr Greville's politeness, asking as if for information of an extreme ignorance, came across to her.

"In what significance do you use the word 'great'?"

"Consider," the lady cried out—she had massive, striking red hair and a massive and very striking pale face of a mealy whiteness—"all the money he's made."

Mr Greville uttered: "Ah!"

"And consider," she went on, "his charities."

"Now what proportion," Mr Greville asked, "do you consider that his charities bear to his income?"

"Ah," the lady said, "I know you're sneering at us. But tell me how many members of your corrupt aristocracy have founded a university?"

Aunt Emmeline leaned across Don to almost groan:

"Ah, too true!"

She had found herself in singular accord with the red-haired lady. She had not ever anywhere met people who so intimately agreed with her views of life as she discovered most of the people on board did. She leaned, however, still further across Don, so that the aigrette in her hair discommoded him, to remark that Mrs Sargent was not to take it for granted that *all* their upper classes were unmindful of their responsibilities; though too few, altogether, recognised what—for instance in their relations to the Church—their duties were; and Mr Greville in turn begged Mrs Sargent to realise that he was not sneering

at her. He was travelling for the sole purpose of informing his mind.

"So that you're *really* coming for pleasure?" And the lady, in her agreeable surprise, pulled still further back the glove that dangled from her white and very plump forearm. "Now that is *real* nice. You're coming to see us as we really are? So few British do."

Aunt Emmeline said that it was indeed lamentable that the better class of *her* island had so little curiosity: it was one of the symptoms, it was probably one of the causes, of British national decay.

"But don't you think," Mr Greville asked Mrs Sargent, "that if we do not come it's because we believe—we're probably very mistaken—that there's nothing to see?"

"You do not believe anything of the sort," Mrs Sargent cried triumphantly. "Go down to the Battery any afternoon and you won't be able to move for the crowds of British rubber-necks with Baedekers looking at the sky-scrapers and the historic monuments. You don't find them like that at the Tower of London!"

Her triumph—and the incomprehensible word that you had to wait to work out its meaning—caused a momentary silence, into which Augustus was able to introduce the virulent statement:

"So that you get us both ways!" And to Mrs Sargent's puzzled expression he vouchsafed the contemptuous explanation that she had said, first, that we were such fools that we never came at all; and secondly, that the sights of New York did attract

us so much that we abandoned our own to an extent that impeded the native-born American . . .

Mr Greville turned his head towards his nephew for sufficiently long to say, over the head of Eleanor, who sat between them:

"We did not come here to convict people of inaccuracies. We came to hear their views."

And Mrs Sargent rolled bread triumphantly between her white fingers and thumbs of both hands, accepting Mr Greville's championing and reflecting upon an effective retort. It came after a decent interval:

"I guess we Americans get you—both ways—*all* the time!" And Mr Greville gallantly but enigmatically bowed his head. Mrs Sargent said brightly then she guessed they were the very nicest party of English she'd ever come across—and she herself had been born in County Cork, so she might claim to know both sides of the water and speak with authority. Augustus, she said, would learn better before he was three months older: he'd find American women very bright, and she reflected with satisfaction upon her retort, repeating, to lose none of its effect, that Americans did get them both ways all the time. She hoped she'd be able to take them round Springfield, Illinois, and show them something of the prettiest town in the world . . .

Don from this, to him, rather painful scene—in his amphibious existence he had heard so much of this Yankee-baiting—retired, a little strengthened, to the consideration of the problem of whether he *ought* to take Eleanor any further into these depths.

It occupied him so fully, the problem, that of the rest of the conversation he only caught Mrs Sargent informing the silent Eleanor that she'd find American gurrils vurry *bright*, and that English women did not know how to put their clothes on, a remark to which Eleanor only smiled a little deafly and bowed with an odd likeness to her father. And he caught Eleanor replying in trenchant undertones to a whisper from Augustus:

"Why, there are ridiculous people everywhere." If he'd been near her chair last night, instead of being in his berth sea-sick, he'd have heard a drunken English country gentleman holding forth to a lot of perfectly silent Yankees about the incorruptibility of English J.P.s and the perfection of the British system. She'd asked herself just the very words that Augustus had just asked her. "Was it possible that people *really* talked like that?" For, as against Mrs Sargent's "corrupt aristocracy" the Englishman had alleged that you could get a verdict from the United States Supreme Court—as all the world knew—by bribing any one of the judges.

"You do not believe people talk such rot till you hear it," she finished trenchantly. "But they *do*. And it would be cruel of dad to draw that poor woman out if he had not got a good reason for it."

The unfortunate Augustus opened his moustache-hidden mouth to retort, but a slow movement that seemed to take the whole place, band, galleries, ferns on the table, and waiters, in one gigantic hand and wave it through the air, made him at first appear to

reflect wildly and then to close his mouth. In spite of the fact that he was assured of £10,000 a year for the next five years and sat next to his cousin, so that he could speak to her in undertones, he was not yet having anything like what Mrs Sargent assured him was to be the time of his life.

It was probably the contact with Mrs Sargent that tipped Don's wavering scale upwards. For he had to face the eternal problem of how much a king owes to his people, how much to his wife: of how much the same king is pledged by promises that he has given before he comes to the throne in face of the sufferings of his tributaries that he discovers after his accession. For he could not disguise from himself the fact that he had pledged himself to let Eleanor lead the orderly, sheltered, almost august life that had seemed to be all that the future promised them.

It was a definite promise that he had made, and, to his scrupulosity, you cannot be relieved from a promise however willing the other party may be. At the same time he could not be certain that he was not bound by a former promise, contracted not by him, but, as it were, by his ancestors—a promise of which Mrs Sargent was, in her vulgar ignorance, a dismal symptom. For undoubtedly his father—and the men of his father's kidney who had preceded him—were responsible for that poor woman. It was they who were responsible for her candid utterance that Greatness was the power to trick coins out of the breeches pockets of the poor or that having you both ways was the ideal of life. His father distinctly was the great prototype of extraction just as his

whole life had been a matter of having everybody not both ways, but in every possible way.

And it seemed to him that it was a duty he had brought with him into the world to re-act against his father. He had, as far as he could, to show that poor woman with the red hair, pasty face, and untidy, flabby, blue cotton shirt waist—who told his Eleanor that she did not know how to put her clothes on and held up to Mr Greville a swindler like his own father as a type of what a corrupt aristocracy should emulate—it was his duty to show that poor woman and the millions that she represented, the millions that his father had taxed, swindled and presented with false ideals, to show them that Greatness was something greater than the habit of accumulation. And perhaps because of the optimistic sensation induced by the immense dinner, by the time the sparkling wine, provided by the Company, and the nickel-silver souvenir pocket-books in which you were to keep a diary of the run (provided also by the Company), had been arrived at, he had momentarily squared the circle of his thoughts. It was the old solution.

For was not he going to the United States to strike a deathblow at what his father represented? Was he not going to cripple all his father's enterprises? Was not he going to—as far as he could—set up a different standard? And would not that standard be the standard of Eleanor?

II

THE sun that night went down leaving a pink-and-golden splendour that put new heart into Mrs Sargent. There lay Mrs Greville, with Eleanor by her side, green and brown rugs wrapped almost up to their noses, their feet rendered glorious by the light from the low sky, which gave to all outlines a soft, luminous enhancing. A never-ceasing procession, silhouetted against the light—of lean men's figures, stout women, children whose little pigtailed cut diagonally the lines of the cordage—passed before their faces, the notes of a harmonium, the clashing of pail-handles to simulate cymbals, laughs and endless, monotonous songs from the emigrants, invisible below their feet, went up to mingle in the brilliant heavens with the rush of the water. It seemed, the darkness down there, to enshroud and to accentuate the jaunty indifference, the squalor, the ferocity or the mere listless, Eastern dejection with which, through the day, the fore-part of the ship, with its kerchiefed, Orientally-draped crowd, seemed to confront the serene castle of luxury that rose, white and embattled, half way between stem and stern.

The sky was a flat, impenetrable pink, and from just to the right of the bows a single backbone of gilt, feathery cloud glowed and slanted, like a vast spruce tree about to fall transversely, up into the pale blue

peak of the heavens. It had, the sky, something of a garish splendour, to which the slatey-blue, unchangeable sea seemed to offer a saturnine comment, and from time to time Mrs Sargent led to their feet, for presentation to these extraordinary Europeans who were travelling to the other side "for pleasure," small bands of what they had come to call "Them."

They made in this way the acquaintance of a Scottish Presbyterian minister from an aristocratic suburb of Philadelphia, who told them that there was no coal smoke in New York; of a lady whose husband owned a button factory in Froudeville, Connecticut; of a judge from Decatur, Illinois; of the son of a distinguished family called Callum of Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, and of a Mr Houston of Brooklyn, who told them, in gentle and despondent tones, that whatever they did they were to avoid the — Hotel in a street whose number he could not just remember. And each of these people cordially endorsed the remark with which, successively, Mrs Sargent introduced them—that they were going to the land to see sunsets. The lady from Froudeville added the rider that they'd find New York very strange but that they'd like it immensely when they got used to it. To which the judge's son added that they were not to think that N'York was America, it was just a sink. It appeared afterwards that by this image he had meant to imply nothing opprobrious, but merely that New York, in its cosmopolitan character, was merely the channel—or, as you might say, the funnel into which the wealth of the Transatlantic continent forced itself in its way

eastward. But all these silhouettes with querulous voices waved their arms towards the invisible sun and the western skies. The sunset, indeed, they assured her was but a first note of what, hospitably and charmingly, they were going to do for them. And Eleanor's protest, wrung from her at the fifth repetition, that they were not thirty-six hours out from Europe so that the sunset might as well be called the last taste of what Europe could do for *them*—Eleanor's protest, for which she felt a certain contrition, was summarily quashed by her Aunt Emmeline. She was inclined to put the sunset down to the sturdy Protestantism and the energy of the Transatlantic race.

They went, she explained, together: skies and energy being synonymous, for was not it a scientific fact that climate had a vast influence upon character? And inviting the gentle Mr Houston and Mrs Sargent to take the dark, vacant chairs next her own, she sent Augustus, who happened at the moment to pass at Don's side, down to her maid's cabin to inquire for a volume of his father's sermons, in which, by a coincidence, that idea of Transatlantic vigour and the occidental skies was rhetorically foreshadowed. And Don, being roundly accused by Aunt Emmeline of unsociability, was constrained amiably to hook one of his long arms round an iron stay and to hoist himself into a sitting posture upon the hard rail; where, silhouetted, too, against the paling sky—the gigantic gilt spruce tree had become a roisterous old man's head—he listened to Mrs Sargent's upbraiding of Mr Houston, who, in the light of the electric lamp that glowed by now from the ceiling above the chairs,

had revealed himself as a small, old, tired-looking gentleman in a Homburg hat and with a short goat's beard. He repeated that he had not been able to sleep in the hotel in 29th Street, and to Mrs Sargent's reprimand that it was unpatriotic and altogether un-American to let an Englishman imagine that the worst American hotel could be worse than the very best English hotel, he repeated once more that he supposed, under correction, it was not the best way to give English visitors a good impression of the States to direct them to an hotel under which they were blasting a tunnel. And whilst Mrs Sargent was demonstrating that to sleep over a tunnel in preparation would be just the thing to give English visitors an idea of the overflowing industry and energy of New York ("So that you get them again both ways!" Don could not help interjecting) Mrs Greville had turned the topic into that of the social organisations attached to American churches.

In that, too, Mrs Sargent assured her, America was exceedingly "live." After slightly sketching the relative positions, socially, of the congregations attaching to various churches—it remotely shocked Don, for Aunt Emmeline's sake, to hear her say that the Protestant Episcopal congregation mostly consisted of kitchenmaids—Mrs Sargent gave instances of this activity: instancing the fact that at Heydon, N.J., the Christian Scientists had, in the vestibule of their new church, a barber's saloon, so that gentlemen—and ladies too—might appear as seemly as possible at the services: and concluding with the triumphant fact that the Rev. Mr Campbell, the Scottish minister

to whom they had been presented and whom they remembered as having told them that there was no coal smoke in New York, had erected in his vestry-house a quick-lunch bar, a tape machine in direct contact with Wall Street, and a telephone, telegraph and messenger-boy service.

"Mr Campbell," Mrs Sargent said, "has in his congregation some of the wealthiest men in the city, men to whom the delay of a minute might mean the loss of a fortune."

And whilst Mrs Greville was, approvingly, saying that the only inefficient parallel that her churches had had was the habit of calling doctors out of service if anyone were ill, Mrs Sargent was saying that it proved her own broadmindedness, inasmuch as, whilst she thus eulogised the Rev. Campbell, she herself was a Catholic.

"You won't find in America," she said, "any of the narrow intolerance that there is on the other side."

And Mr Houston's timid "No, indeed!" which resembled more than anything else a clearing of his thin brown throat, was emphasised by a much more audible "No, indeed!" from Aunt Emmeline.

Don lost himself in conjectures as to what exactly could be Mrs Greville's little game. And as he averaged it out she must imagine herself at last in a *milieu* where her social, ecclesiastical and organising excellences would enable her to shine as they had not—even in the good days of her husband's episcopacy—enabled her to shine anywhere yet. As she would see it, he mused, she was amongst an infinite number—the representatives of eighty millions—of absolutely

middle-class people. Not one of the individuals that she saw around her could be reasonably "placed" at all in her mind. So that she had only, whilst paying a purely temporary deference to their odd opinions, to reveal herself as a real Bishop's wife, to stand forth as an absolute dictator of manners, district-visiting and the disciplining of minor clergy.

And she confirmed him in this speculation—just as Eleanor, by stirring in her chair, exhibited the symptoms that he so much desired, to join him—by suddenly telling him to go and see what had become of Augustus and the volume of her husband's sermons. For she had remembered—with regard to Mrs Sargent's claim for a height of tolerance in the United States—a certain sermon of her husband's preached before a ruri-diaconal conference. In this she had herself forced the bishop to say that if the Roman Catholics would abandon some of their heresies, and the Nonconformists were to abandon some of their stiffneckedness, how exceedingly good it would be for the Church. For, as Don realised, it is extremely difficult to inform a lady who will not listen to you that you are the wife of a Bishop. Whereas a title-page can't be ignored.

In the course of long wanderings in the deeper stages of the ship, with their slight but persistent odours, their slight but insistent creakings of polished wood and, their perspectives that seemed infinite, Don several times lost his way. It is indeed one of the most difficult things in the world, when you have turned a number of corners, gone down and up a number of oscillating staircases, to retain in your

mind just where you are or even to realise whether you are going towards the stem or the stern. And having discovered that Aunt Emmeline's maid was too overcome to begin to consider the problem of finding where in the world Aunt Emmeline's copy of her husband's treatises might be (she addressed instead, through the crack of her door, to Don and the stewardess the unanswerable riddle: Why had she ever left Reading?), Don was faced with the problem of discovering what had become of Augustus. He had, the stewardess said, shown, poor gentleman, half an hour before, unmistakable signs of wishing that he had never come to *that* atmosphere. From there he vanished.

Don in his kind-heartedness could not think of taking his valet away from a vastly congenial and just-learned game of poker in the smoking-room, as indeed he would not have thought of leaving poor Augustus to a mere valet. And, his heart filled with concern, and dominated too with a dread that Eleanor might have turned in, Don coursed through what appeared to be miles of passages of shining white paint, shining mahogany and stifled creakings, up to a region where the white paint gave way to fumed oak and painted panels representing cornucopiæ, birds of paradise or nymphs. He coursed out along wind-swept promenade decks, peeped at familiar faces of the prostrate occupiers of deck chairs. He found, in their private saloon with the yellow and gilt velvet, Mr Greville, lean, rigid and attentive, and in the Socratic manner, extracting from the captain, who was a blaze of gilt bindings, red face and golden,

harsh hair, facts as to the conditions of service in the United States mercantile marine.

Because the captain was stiffly anxious to make the acquaintance of Don, whom he called "Mr Ke-Greville," Don was forced to stay and admire the aster heads, each as large as a mop, that the captain had done himself the pleasure of sending in for the ladies of the party. There was not, indeed, anything fulsome about the captain, though, upon hearing the cause of Don's concern, he offered to place at his disposal one of his mates to find Augustus. But it was minutely disagreeable to Don to be called "Mr Ke-Greville." And he seemed to read into the captain's hard-bitten, defensive blue eyes the fact that with each word he uttered Captain Mulock was saying really: "Look here, you're my owner. But you can't promote me for you've nothing bigger in this line to give. And you can't, if you're a decent man, deprive me of the ship, for I'm impeccable."

"Oh, well"—Don was driven to take the bull by the horns—"I trust you'll respect my desire for secrecy. I've got reasons that I'm sure you'd approve yourself." And when the captain laid a great red hand upon the evening shirt-front that gave to his gilded broadcloth a final and tremendous finish, and assured him that he'd taken to America two duchesses, a French Ambassador and an English Cabinet Minister without a soul's even having learnt that they'd been in the States, Don followed his advice and sought for Augustus in the extreme bow and the extreme stern.

"It's what they all want," he said. "Darkness

and privacy," and he laughed a cordial and jovial laugh. He'd crossed the Atlantic, he said, man and boy, three hundred times.

The episode aroused in Don a vague disquiet, for it reminded him again that he owned all this . . . all this! He had not remembered the fact half a dozen times in the course of the two days. Yet to all intents and purposes it was true. He owned it and it was only an infinitesimal part of his possessions that he knew each minute grew and grew. It was worse, the feeling, when he came among the emigrants, with whom the warm, still night had filled the dark chasms of the encumbered decks. They sat on great iron discs, they hung on to steel ropes, they lay on the smoothed boards, half invisible and wholly unrealisable. You could not distinguish them by names any more than you could tell where one class of the ship began and the other ended once you were out of the central castle. And the feeling dominated him when he had found Augustus leaning beside the flagstaff at the stern and had been simply damned for suggesting that there the motion of the vessel was at its worst. And in that darkness, where Augustus appeared nothing but a huddled, disagreeable black mass, lifted up and down against the horizon, it struck Don that he could not even understand Augustus!

In the half way between the stern and the central elevation, where the steerage passengers were massed, some of them had got hold of a storm lamp and had hung it from a bridge that spanned the dark deck. And to the sound of a concertina jerkily wheezing out

the air of a Parisian waltz, a pair of Tyrolese—the man in a wide hat with a black cock's plume, dragging his leg as a barnyard cock does, and with a bearded face and ferociously glistening teeth, the woman in short skirts with white stockings—danced, he intermittently sending out a volley of hand-smackings from his knees, his thighs, his ankles, and even his heels, to the rhythm which was marked by the clapping of a pail handle. In the same ring the sombre-skirted figure of a solitary man, Roumanian, Wallachian or Cypriote, was turning reservedly as if in a very slow Highland Fling, his hands above his head. And in the dusky niche around them faces indistinguishable—Jewish, Oriental, Italian, blonde, red-haired, or eager like those of London street arabs—peered out and muttered. Don asked in German of a shawled figure, half distinguishable near him, where she came from and where she was going. She drew the shawl closer over her head and moved an inch or two away. Not one of all these people noticed him—and obviously in this crowd of strange figures nothing could be noticeable. Not even the dusky Roumanian in his skirts. And he would never know where one of them came from or what they came out to seek. What could he—who, after all, had immense power—do for these people? He might make one—he might make them all—rich! But what good would that do? The good that they needed was to be taught that good did not come with riches. Yet in all probability they were flying from the tangible ills of hunger, cold, oppression, rapine and even butchery. They sought, perhaps, some of them, Liberty. Yet

most of them probably were attracted by deeds such as those of his father's, who had been born in a workhouse to die with an infinite power—to do what? To drink wine? buy women? purchase votes? What, in the inscrutable depths of these poor minds, did immense wealth signify? There might be—there probably were—in the thousand or so of them great artists, great thinkers, who went to seek the purely idealistic. How, if he set himself the task—if he interpreted his mission as that of helping those who came first to his hand—how was he to ascertain whose ideals were infinite freedom, whose were infinite opportunities for bestiality, or whose simply the desire for opportunities to live and think? What could he do?—what could he do for any of them?

A profound discouragement overcame him. He remembered the miles of white and mahogany passages in the centre of the ship. What ideals had all the people who, in the warmth and tranquillised security, slept in those innumerable precisely similar cells? And this ship that to all intents and purposes he owned was only an infinitesimal fragment of the whole of his problem. For his problem embraced all humanity. He was at that moment the wealthiest—and to that extent the most powerful—of all the men in the world. But what he wanted to do was to use his power to influence minds. Otherwise he could give all these people an extravagantly good dinner, a circus entertainment, or present each one of them with an Old Glory in satin stars and stripes. He might give every tenth man a hundred thousand dollars and see what came of it . . .

And although that sort of thing did not appeal to him he could not be certain—he had insight enough to be uncertain—that that sort of thing precisely wasn't the best thing that he could do. He might, in that way, form the basis of a fortune for some poet or some thinker great enough to influence all the United States, all these cartloads of emigrants, all the world. In the sort of semi-socialist ideals in which he had been brought up, which dominated pretty well the whole world, the panacea was undoubtedly something in the way of examinations, scholarships, investigations of some sort. Then ought he to hold some sort of examination of all the population of the ship? But what sort of examination? Had any good really come to the world with the prevalence of that school of thought? Was the United States any the better for it—or humanity? He thought it was.

But, on the other hand, had not all his ideals come from past ages when certainly examinations had not even been discovered. Was not, at bottom, the feeling that dominated all these miles of corridors loathsome, dull, uniform, materialistic? Was there in all this miracle of modernity a single touch of poetry or of the finer feelings? If there were—and he did not deny it—he had not yet discovered it. And if he could not discover even the spark of it how was he—he!—to fire it into a blaze?

Before his eyes that central castle rose up, dark, but glowing through many portholes, so that it appeared to have inside a glowing and radiant centre—like the turnip-headed ghost of a country church-

yard! He stood among the nameless crowd and it rose up inaccessible to them.

But was it like a castle? No, it was square, it was obviously of iron plate: at the top the monstrous forms of huge ventilators turned to right and left. The galleries that were formed by the layers of decks made it have a little the air of a Chinese pagoda. But it was not even like a Chinese pagoda; it had not any quaintness, any grace of outline. It was not like part of a seafaring vessel; it was not like anything. Or yes! It was like a gigantic packing-case jammed down on to the gracious lines of a vessel. That was what they had done for ships—he and his. They had filled its real decks with a huddled, nameless crowd: they had jammed a packing-case down upon its hold.

And yet, he was aware, ships had been fine, graceful, air-swept vehicles for the *Finer Spirit*. But it seemed to him that *this* ship—this ship of his—was nothing but an offence, with its trail of smoke to the august, black heavens and the vast swarms of blazing stars. There was not, probably, on that whole vessel a person that you could “place”: there was not a name that mattered.

The decks of the packing-case were nearly deserted now. In the topmost gallery but one a single figure moved round and round, appearing in the light of one side, disappearing in that of the other. They were going to sleep there. Here around him the sounds of the concertina, the clapping of the pail handles, still went up . . .

Perhaps the fact that the people in the packing-

case had not any names and could not be placed—perhaps the very fact that they were all so hopelessly middle-class and fluctuating would make his task easier. It is, after all, easier to destroy a packing-case than a feudal castle or even a Chinese pagoda. There were not there any castes, any ranks, any classes to whom the shedding of blood had given an almost moral significance and stability. It might then be easier to infuse into these people a great ideal—an ideal of solidarity, of self-sacrifice, of co-operation—an ideal of a Greatness distinct from the acquisition of riches or of the power to “bluff!” They could not, those two national ideals, have taken a very deep hold. It was a matter of such very recent history, this tradition of evil that had been founded by men like his father. He was not very strong in history: but was not the “millionaire” the product of the half century since ’49? Was not he a figure that another half century might consign to oblivion? Because, precisely, you could not place them. They had not the prescriptive rights of having done a service to the community that, in the old world, made one tender to a certain *gens*, to certain families. It was, was it not? the Transatlantic social mill, just one ant-heap in which *any* ant struggled through the mass to the outside on the top. You could pull down an ant-heap. You could clear away that central packing-case and the lines of the ship would be once more revealed. After all, what was the sense of writing up First “Class” or Second “Class” on a vessel that went towards the West? It was not a matter of class: it was a

matter of a few more coins out of the breeches pocket.

Then assuredly these class limits could be swept away from the vessel with a very small struggle. You would perhaps be able to do it by uttering the, to the American, damning word "*undemocratic.*" For assuredly that ideal was very strong even with the Mrs Sargents.

Supposing he were to inaugurate his sway of this "line" by uttering a manifesto that all class distinctions were precisely anti-national. Supposing he were to build steamers without that central mass, but clean, roomy, fine from stem to stern. And then he might issue a bold challenge to all American users of boats, daring them to travel by any others at the risk of being called un-American. Would not that be a great step? And would not the example of it bear fruit even in Europe: would not it cause, even there, a further stage in the gradual euthanasia of class distinctions that was going on all over the world. Example! Was not that really the thing that counted? His father's wide example had done much harm: might not his, by that device, create a new standard? For he had heard it advanced again and again against his countrymen that what they needed, what they absolutely lacked, was precisely standards!

And then—because he had not gone to school at Harrow or mixed with Tories for nothing—there came into his head the discouraging idea that no law ever acts as it is intended to do. You pass a law to restrict the number of drink-shops and the children

see their parents drink at home and the streets are filled with female drunkards—so that Heaven knew what would be the effect of abolishing the classes on his ships. He could not see that any evil would result: but it might mean the disappearance for ever of any mingling of European and American culture. Decent people might refuse to travel. You simply could not tell *how* it would influence ideals! You couldn't tell anything. He wanted to help the people pent up before him to a purer type of ideals; he wanted intensely to help all these poor people round him.

He felt for his watch: it seemed to him that he must have lost hours—that Eleanor would be in bed by now. But his watch wasn't there. He supposed he must have left it in his berth. Yet his pocket-book wasn't there: his cigarette-case was gone—even his handkerchief. It annoyed him—because his pocket-book contained one of Eleanor's letters. However, he had Eleanor . . .

Of course there would be criminals going to the United States. And he wondered what *their* ideals were.

Up on the third deck in front of him there appeared, at the angle, beneath the light, the figure of Mr Houston. Small, his Homburg hat on the back of his head, his hands deep in the pockets of his smooth black overcoat, his little beard pointing nearly horizontally, he appeared to gaze at something far off in the night.

And suddenly it occurred to Don that it was absurd to say you can't "place" Americans. This

gentle and tolerant old man with the low, trustable voice was Mr Houston of Brooklyn. Half the people on the packing-case would know him as coming of a good family who had lived in Columbia Road for generations. Mr Houston had "retired," which wasn't quite American, but it was condoned by the ill-health that showed in every line of his figure. It didn't count at all that the Houstons for generations had made their money by manufacturing stove-pipe elbows. What mattered, even to the people of the packing-case, was that the Houstons had been distinguished for probity, gentleness and benevolence—for character, in short. And wasn't that just as much a class distinction as anything else? Wouldn't it be as cruel not to provide a little privacy for this poor old man with his need for quiet as to force Eleanor to mix with the people who had picked his pocket?

Mr Houston moved his head round on his thin neck and uttered some inaudible words, and immediately afterwards Eleanor, muffled to the eyes in a golf cape, came to stand beside him and to follow the direction of his hand into the night.

And whilst in rejoining them Don once more lost himself in the mazes of the packing-case, coming out in a bewildering way where, beneath a rather dim light, the second-class passengers lay about under undistinguished-looking shawls, finding the grille drawn along the long deck and mounting more corridor stairs, utterly unable to locate the particular gallery upon which he had seen them, Don was wondering in his mind whether actually Eleanor had

any more claim to consideration than Mr Houston. He was quite aware that she wouldn't nowadays get it. Modern philosophy would have it that to manufacture stove-pipe elbows was as glorious a thing as to crack them—and wasn't mediæval warfare a matter of cracking with a steel bar a stove pipe on another man's head? So that considering an individual to be no more than a link in the chain of his family, wasn't Mr Houston as precious metal as were Eleanor and her father? Was he or wasn't he? He represented the manufacture of stove pipes, she only their destruction.

Every modern creed would give the answer that he was better: Mrs Sargent would say so: his Fabian friends would say so—even Eleanor might be sufficiently moved by the life all round her, or by the enunciations of her friend the Canon to say that Peace hath her victories and the rest of it. But was it true? Was it true in the sense of the Eternal Verities and apart from modern accepted Ideals? Was not Eleanor, as representing people who had really acted in their own persons, of a more vital tradition than Mr Houston, whose ancestry had merely taken the profits of poor wretches' toil?

Before he could feel himself equipped to do anything he would have to settle in his mind all these mere first principles. He felt it himself, but it was forcibly put to him in these very words by Mr Greville ten minutes later. He had found Eleanor hanging on to Mr Houston's gentle support and walking very slowly along the covered deck, from above which the globular lamps sent down a soft

glow on their figures. Mr Houston seemed to have discovered a soft, ancient elective affinity for her. With his black-gloved, thin hands he was fending their roll from the side-rail, and he was telling her, as a good joke, how he had taken a row-boat full of oranges to the lighthouse men of the most northerly lighthouse in the world. He had seen from the North Cape the tower on the horizon and he had said: *Hullo*, he supposed those fellows would like some oranges. He had started on his voyage round the world with a truck load of California oranges—and he still had some left in the steamer's refrigerators. And as he leaned back, small, brown-faced, white-bearded and gentle-eyed, promising her, as he resigned her to Don, to send her a few for herself to-morrow morning, he seemed to be offering her the homage due from the representative of one fine tradition to another. Noble natures, after all, leap to each other across the ages as across the waters ship salutes ship. . . . And Eleanor, catching her arm into Don's, remarked, as she watched the old man's figure timidly disappearing into the narrow saloon doorway, that he was a rather charming old person. He had, it seemed, been offering his tribute of California oranges to elect natures all over the globe. And what more, Don asked himself, could he demand of his countryman?

But the young people hadn't made more than one turn of the quarter-mile deck—they hadn't indeed dismissed Mr Houston and his adventures from their conversation before they were joined by Mr Greville, who, with his lean features, his frock-coat and soft,

wide-awake-like scholar's hat, resembled, extraordinarily in the lights and shades, Uncle Sam himself. As Eleanor, saluting him gaily, said: "You couldn't have told he wasn't an American."

"Ah, wait till you hear him speak," Don answered gaily too.

For, linked to Eleanor, who in turn linked herself to her father, he seemed to feel that they had a solidarity—perhaps it came from their added sure-footedness now that the wind was freshening. It was as if they were indeed a family, he and they; as if he had acquired their point of view. He didn't seem any more to float, lost and alone. The water roared past them, an infinitely little space of white dimly seen, an infinitely vast space of solid black; the wind, catching them, caused them to pause a little at the forward corner and sent them hurrying a little down the other side, where, at the far angle, a man in a grotesquely-shaped ear-cap leaned over the rail, gazing at the blurred stars. The lights and the noises had died away in the inscrutable blackness of the ship's forward deck. There was nothing any longer visible save the black fantastic forms of windlasses and spars, adding with their deeper shadows to shadows already black. And as the ship sped on, leaving in the mind the impression of something immense, trustworthy and intent on its end, through the night, trackless and enigmatic, it seemed to Don—it was an impression rather than any reasoned evolution—that all these people, far beneath his feet now, had sunk literally into still deeper depths of unimportance. They didn't matter, they were the raw material, the ore

with which one worked—without names, without traditions, with nothing but a future that he should have to mould.

It was then that Mr Greville delivered himself of his apothegm, after Don had delivered himself of a tranquillised version of his searchings of the soul—a version that in relation to his former vividness of feelings was as the packing-case on which he stood was to the depths from which he had looked up.

“What you ought to do,” Mr Greville said, “is to find yourself.”

He hadn’t got to bother about trains of thought, but about what he wanted. And Mr Greville hazarded the further speech :

“If a man is determined to inflict himself on his time it is his duty first to consider what *he is* ! For what is criminal is to wobble once you have begun. A man has to define what his ideal is and then to make for it.”

“Ah,” Don said, “that is what people have been telling me all my life . . .”

“Study, if you’ve got the brain”—Mr Greville cut him short—“or if you haven’t, and have the temperance, let things alone. You’ll do less harm if you let things alone. But you’ll do infinitely more if, once you’ve begun to meddle, you change your mind ! ” He spoke without any passion. It wasn’t, assuredly, any business of his to meddle with other people.

It was Eleanor who imparted the personal note.

“Whatever you do is so certain to be kind that . . .”

"That I'm rather to strain after effects that seem cruel?" Don asked her. "I'm to strain for such effects as drowning new-born puppies if they're likely to prove mongrels."

She didn't quite follow his image, and, under cover of her pause for reflection, he got away into the reminiscence he was determined upon.

"When I was in Paris," he said, "I worked in an *atelier* where Whistler used to visit. He made me his monitor. I had to call silence for him and turn round canvases on easels. I thought I was rather fine. But when the *atelier* broke up, principally because he wouldn't visit it regularly, he told me to come and see him. 'Look here,' he said, 'you think I made you monitor because I thought you were promising. You aren't. You're a hopeless duffer. But you're pleasant. That's why I chose you!'" And when Don, crushed but valiant, had asked the master what he meant, the master had turned, wasplike, upon a sketch of his own. 'Look there,' he said, 'that's painted. That's a masterpiece. Look at that spade! But you'll never paint. You never will see. You're a poet. Go and write little verses. Go and moon about.' And when he was still further pressed he had brought out: 'You can't paint a spade because you can't see the thing that the light plays on; you see the hunger in the entrails of the peasant who's going to dig with it! You can't paint hunger!'"

And whilst Eleanor brought out: "What a rude bear he always was!" Mr Greville formulated:

"Did you ever reflect on those words?"

He cut, however, Don's flow of protest that he never thought about anything else short with the words that whilst he always saw so many aspects of everything he couldn't ever expect to do anything. It was a form of laziness.

"And I don't see," he finished, "why you can't be content to go on being lazy."

And whilst Don was protesting that the thought of people who talked like Mrs Sargent goaded him to desperation, Mr Greville again cut him short.

"If all you're going to do in throwing your money away is to attempt to change Mrs Sargent and her people, it is sheer waste of effort; she'll be an odious fool whatever you give her for example. You won't change their hearts or give them intellects. That class of intellect is the same in England or America. They'll always be the same whether you gather the wealth of your country into two hands or distribute it to the eighty million."

And having delivered this staggerer he unlinked his arm from Eleanor's and announced that he was going to fetch his book. He had already erected a custom to suit his new environment, that of sitting in a deck chair in the evenings and studying a United States Baedeker for an hour before turning in. He was intent on getting for himself the lie of the streets in several American towns, so that he would never have to ask the way supposing that—which he doubted—the inscriptions on American street corners were to be found or trusted.

At the mere mention of this desire Don had sprung forward to the deck door and was fetching

the Baedeker. And Eleanor, up in the darkness with her father, fenced the question that she really wanted to ask by asking another.

"Father," it came, "why don't you ever like to ask your way?"

He surveyed her with what, in his affectionate gaze, was almost surprise, as if she ought to have understood.

"I'm sure," she continued, "you're always asking people other questions."

"My dear," he said, "if you'll observe you'll see that I never ask for information as to facts."

"You only collect foolish points of view?" she said, thinking of the red-haired lady.

"I collect points of view," he answered, avoiding her adjective. "If I want information—facts upon which I'm going to act myself—I find out for myself. I should advise you to pursue the same course."

She buttoned the golf cape more closely under her chin as a gust of wind from out of the gleaming and black void took the two of them, whirling her white skirts about his legs.

"Of course it makes one tremendously sure," she said musingly. "But it leaves one a frightfully narrow field."

He was looking at the invisible windward of the ship.

"What does one want to do a lot of things for?" he asked, and descending from his impossible generalities to his affection and politeness he asked once more: "Don and you know the Yorkshire saying: 'A little farm well tilled, A little wife well willed, A little purse well filled'—that's all you want!"

"But there are great ideas, aren't there?" she countered him absently—intent on defending Don.

"There aren't—great—facts!" he said slowly.

And suddenly she brought out her real question: "What are we going for?"

He went slowly to his deck chair, picked up his dark plaid shawl and draped it round the shoulders of his frock coat. He returned to her, and standing before her, although he strongly disliked answering questions, he gave it her full in the face.

"To look after Don!"

"But, dear," she said, as she began to digest this statement, "you know I'm provided for whatever he does."

Her father leaned back against the ship's rail and extracted one hand from the rug that shrouded his shoulder.

"So that"—she pursued her commentary on his words—"you aren't looking after my interests. It's him!"

She reflected and then said softly:

"He *is* rather a dear, isn't he? You *do* like him?"

Her father, leaning, draped, back against the rails, still didn't answer her. But at last he said:

"Probably pickpockets couldn't strip him fast enough to leave him naked. But tell me what he's paying Augustus ten thousand a year for?"

This hit Eleanor so closely that she started.

"It's really great folly," she said, "all the same, if Augustus appeals to him . . ."

"Yes!" Her father caught her up. "It's the things that appeal to him that will play the mischief

with everything he attempts. He'll never do anything. He's like every manifestation of his country—hysterical."

She said softly:

"If you like him so much, dear, aren't you a little hard on him?"

He crooked his large forefinger at her from somewhere near his hips.

"You know I'm not," he said. "And don't run away with any false ideas, I'm not in love with Don. But if he's going to do a certain piece of work I want him to do it cleanly. I shouldn't have given myself all this trouble and derangement for the sake of what he'd call his *beaux yeux*." He looked at her solemnly, but with a certain trouble in his eyes. "It amounts to this: He's bound, in the nature of events, to be brought up against me, with all his troubles, for as long as I've got to live. He'll constantly be depressing you: you'll constantly be coming to me. I don't want to meddle with him or his problems. But I shall have to."

"You mean," she asked, "that he'll be losing his money foolishly and asking you, through me, to retrieve it?"

"Child," he said, "you're astonishingly naïve still. It isn't the money he'll lose that will distress him. He can't lose money enough. He'll find his father's tied it up too well. It's the silly things he'll do every time anything appeals to him. He'll found Institutions and find they breed beastlier chaps than ever. He'll raise co-operative factories and find the hands will dissipate all their profits in shove

halfpenny. I wouldn't mind wagering that he'll try to purify the municipal politics of some wretched town, and he'll find that his money is being used by his reforming, lieutenants to bribe into existence the worst Tammany that's ever been known. And I shall be forced to pay attention to all these muddles. *That's* why I'm coming with you."

"You poor old dad!" Eleanor said softly, "you think that you'll be able to guide him."

He stirred uneasily.

"No, you don't," she said quickly, "you think that the companionship of a sensible man may harden his backbone a little at the start."

And she added as swiftly, whilst Don appeared a long way away with the Baedeker in his hand:

"Don't you think we're both of us agitating ourselves, possibly for nothing? Isn't it just as likely as not he'll see so many aspects of misanthropy that he'll never make up his mind to do anything at all, ever?"

As Mr Greville drew himself to an erect posture on the deck he uttered, almost with tones of misgiving:

"You talk as if you were an old married woman."

"Well, you made us understand that you wanted a long engagement," she answered. "I've had time to get used to him by now."

III

“ I SUPPOSE,” Eleanor whispered in Don’s ear as, linked now together and alone, they disappeared in the darkness of the promenade deck, “ that why I really care for you is that you’re a poet ! ” They had left Mr Greville comfortably tucked in beneath a circular lamp, studying through his large glasses one of the plans of New York, and had, with a feeling, minute but dispirited, of escape at last, gone round the corner of the saloon. “ I’m as hard as he is but we’ve both got—though he tries to act as if it weren’t so—a very soft spot for dears like you.”

And no doubt her diagnosis was helped by what she certainly considered to be the weakness of her father for Don. She could see what attracted her father and argued from it what attracted her. And their engagement had been of long standing. It had come about in one of those odd, “ most natural manners in the world ” that are so common in very individualistic societies. Nothing in fact was so unlikely as that a girl like Eleanor should seriously take up the study of painting. In her particular type of society a girl dabbles in it, producing mild water-colours that, since they cover their parents’ walls, have at least the function of spoiling the market for professional painting, and thus keeping those

outsiders in their social places. But it was characteristic of Eleanor that, having once, towards the age of twenty-eight, been filled with a desire to paint, she should desire to get to the bottom of the matter. She wasn't going to leave it at water-colour sketches. Similarly, if it were odd that she should go to live in Paris to get at the facts, it was the most logical thing in the world that her father should insist that if she insisted on really taking up the study she should go to the place in the world where it can be most studied *au fond*. She had accordingly gone to Paris, and—to go to the very centre of it—she had gone to that very *atelier* in which Don had been inducted with the responsibilities of monitor. The master who there gibed at the students' productions was, in those days, esteemed at least the most workmanlike under whom it was possible to sit. He had gibed at Eleanor's studies as mercilessly as at any of the others, but it affected her less because she noticed that he didn't gibe more. And when, upon the break up of the *atelier*, owing to the irregular visits of the master, Don had assured her that the next only man in the world to study under was to be found in a state institution in London, she had very composedly followed Don to her own country.

The companionable, free life that she had led with him and with other girl and men students had proved, she had found, perfectly compatible with a quite composed observance of the decencies. And it wasn't till she had finally decided—and it was easier to decide it under the more equable rule of the London master—that she hadn't the least gift for

painting that she had discovered that she had grown so used to Don that she couldn't possibly do without him. It was as if from long looking over portfolios of prints, interchanging remarks on which they had generally agreed, they had suddenly looked into each other's eyes and said, simultaneously: "You *are* rather a dear!"

Their approach to that point had indeed been so gradual—they had happened to live, both of them, near the northern terminus of a 'bus route, the School of Art being at its further end, and most of their unconscious courting had taken place on the tops of 'buses as you might say in Tottenham Court Road—that there hadn't been any point at which she could have warned her father of anything. She had indeed been so unconscious that Don's "socialism" hadn't seemed to matter. She hadn't, in fact, in the least meant to marry him, and if he were a Fabian, or something like a Fabian, tempered with passages that made him at times say things with which she couldn't altogether agree, about the populations who lived sordid lives round about the Tottenham Court Road, the views had been appropriate enough in the second master of a School of Design. He'd never show any signs of wanting to "do" anything; he'd limited himself very appropriately, considering whose daughter she was, to saying that certain things, in an ideal state of society, would be very much otherwise. He had not even shown any very alarmingly artistic "gifts." On the contrary, at about the date when she had determined that she hadn't any gift at all, he had made the

discovery that he wasn't fit to do much more than illustrate stories and songs for the slightly better magazines of two continents . . .

So that there—if we add the fact that Mr Greville was faced by a situation from which he was actually too disinclined to exertion to attempt to extricate his daughter—there they were!

And on the top of the packing-case in the dark, with the spray of the sea in the air, as on top of the omnibuses, in the misty glare of the arc lights of the Tottenham Court Road, they were still, as lovers will, talking a great deal about themselves and a little about the problems that lurked behind the gilded signs on the house fronts or behind the impenetrable blackness of the night. The sea was beginning to get up; the boat threw them about a little as they walked, and to avoid running constantly into a solitary slim figure that, save for Mr Greville and themselves, was alone on the deck they turned round and walked the reverse way.

Eleanor was explaining to Don that it was just because he was a poet that he did such charming illustrations. They were always, his illustrations, infinitely better than the stories they adorned and that was because he saw precisely the side issues. Eleanor had reached this point of her discourse when the natural consequences of their turning to avoid the stranger who had walked before them took place—they ran against him round the bows of the packing-case. And as the vessel at that moment had lifted its bows, in their run forward they nearly bore him off his feet. In the contact Don's cap fell off and,

with Eleanor on his arm, he stood erect, seeming almost to touch the electric light above. Its rays streamed down on his regular large and friendly features. And the stranger, returning to him the cap that he was free to stoop for, found his gentle apologies cut short by the words, forcing themselves from him:

“ You’re Don—Collar—Kelleg! ”

A slight feeling of dismay beset Eleanor. It immensely suited her that Don should travel *incognito*: she did not desire that they should journey through the United States heralded with drum and trumpet like the elephants of a travelling circus. And it had suited Don’s book. He imagined that if he went in his tremendous character of the richest citizen on earth he would not ever get to see “ conditions ”—of labour or of life—as they normally were. It suited Mr Greville very well, for it didn’t trouble him to move about with celebrities on his arm, and if he didn’t believe that he would ever learn anything profitable about the “ conditions ” of the New World in the course of a four months’ tour, he disliked cordially and with tenacity anything approaching to “ fuss.” It suited Augustus very well because, in the circumstances, he would have hated to see Don made much of. And Mr Greville before starting had called the two servants before him and had said that it wasn’t for him to expect that they wouldn’t gossip with other servants about the dispositions and characters of their employers. They might therefore gossip to their hearts’ contents and as their consciences allowed. But they were to understand that they

were not to speak of Don as other than Mr Don Greville.

And if the comparatively inconspicuous nature of this tour didn't so exactly suit Aunt Eleanor—she would have preferred infinitely to travel as the aunt of anyone who was the somethingist something in the world—if her tongue constantly itched to bray forth the fact, along with the fact that she was the Bishopess of —, she had the practical sense to keep silence for the sake of Augustus's ten thousand a year. For she couldn't imagine that Don wouldn't be vindictive if he were vexed; and she had accepted the idea that at least the early part of their tour was to have the aspect of a short preliminary inspection of the ground by Don . . .

It came therefore as a relief to Eleanor to discover that upon Don's fine illuminated features there wasn't much trace of perturbation.

He held out instead a large hand, and with, in his voice, that touch of cordiality that one reserves for people that one has not met for many years, he uttered the words:

“ You're Carlo, of course.”

They moved by unspoken accord to a portion of the deck to which the wind, whipping round the corner, hadn't so much access.

“ I thought,” Don said, “ that there was a likeness. But I couldn't find the name in the passengers' list.”

The young man laughed pleasantly.

“ You'd have found the name of ' Angeli,' which was my mother's before she married, just as I should

have found, I daresay, that there wasn't a 'Kelleg' in the boat, though you're here."

Don, who in Eleanor's eyes was plainly reflecting upon something serious, here took a definite step, and she found herself being introduced to a dark, very much muffled young man as the Count Carlo Canzano.

With his odd, peaked and winged, foreign cap, that was obviously an automobilist's, removed and in his hand, the dark young man revealed olive and aquiline features and a nose that curved down over a military black moustache, blue-black hair and a quite radiant smile. There wasn't the least accent in his voice when he said to her: What an odd sensation it was to run suddenly up against someone he had known once so well! There wasn't the least accent, and there wasn't the least inquisitiveness as to her. And she seemed to gather that in his attitude to her there was implied an almost greater impersonality than would have been appropriate had Canzano been Don's most intimate friend. He didn't peer even for a second into what she knew were the deep shadows her lace scarf cast down over her features. He stood instead for a moment staring at his foreign patent shoes. He smiled a little and said then:

"Well, let us get our parts correct: you are Miss Greville, *you* Mr Don Greville, and I am Mr Charles Angeli. It's settled then . . ."

He paused for a moment, holding out his hand to Eleanor, but then suddenly he turned upon Don.

"Unless," he said suddenly, "you don't intend to recognise me in the future."

"Heaven forbid!" Don said energetically. "I don't see that we need scruple about our parents' misunderstandings."

"I'm joining my mother, you understand." Canzano seemed to press the matter further home. And then, recognising from Don's face that that too didn't make any great difference, he said gaily:

"After all, we were extraordinarily friendly. Boston, I don't mind confessing to you, Miss Greville, seemed quite another place when Don was there. I acted as his *cicerone*." He reflected again and said: "That will be six years ago now, won't it?"

And Eleanor commented:

"But surely—Don hasn't been in the United States for much longer than that?"

Canzano stuck to it obstinately.

"It can't be more, for it's six years yesterday since I left Boston with him for Italy . . ." But she noticed that he appeared to catch Don's eye and suddenly he said good-night and disappeared along the deck.

"Let me see you in the smoking-room for ten minutes," Don called after him.

She uttered what appeared to her a bright "Then I'd better go," when the anguish on his face and his muttered "Don't be *too* angry with me!" made her supplement it with:

"Why in the world should I?"

"Because," his answer came, "I was in Boston six years ago."

It was so in her nature to acquiesce in what her menfolk did that she said:

"And why in the world shouldn't you have been?"

It took him aback.

"But," he said, "I had always concealed it from you."

She repeated in almost the same tones and in almost the same words, adding:

"If you take a walk now, I don't ask you to tell me every board you've looked at."

He couldn't still come out of his concern—for it wasn't the measure of her resentment that concerned him, but the measure in which, scrupulously speaking, he had sinned against her. He tried to make a clean breast of it now.

"My father asked me to go over and see him after my mother died. But there were certain features of the visit that I couldn't—that I couldn't bear, in loyalty to him. . . . After all, he was my father. And then. . . . So I concealed the whole affair . . ."

In his moments of emotion Don's fine flow of phrases had the trick of deserting him altogether. And, from the jumbled sequence of words of contrition and of extenuation that he now brought out, she could tell how moved he was if she couldn't tell exactly what it was that moved him.

She answered his final "It's been on my mind for years, ever since I knew you, that I ought to have told you," with a tenderness such as she would have vouchsafed to a too-sensitive child.

"Dear," she said, "it makes me ever so proud that you should have *wanted* to tell me. But it's a great deal more than I ever desired or ever *should* desire."

And she added at his shake of the head:

"After all, what sort of relationship between man and woman would call for his bringing his father's dirty linen for her to see."

"Ah," he said, "but it would have explained so much if I had told you."

"I think, dear," she countered him, "that you're a little mad on explaining. What could it have told me about you that I didn't know?"

He put his hands on both her shoulders and stood swaying her a little on her feet and gazing half humorously, half with suspense, into her kindly and liquid orbs.

"It might have prepared you for what my father's done."

"Your father's only done what every father would have," she answered. "And at this moment we don't even know quite what he *has* done. But you couldn't have explained to me more clearly—if I hadn't been a fool—that your father couldn't have disliked you enough to cut you off with a shilling. No one in the world could have done that—to *you*. And I ought to have known—and I ought to have realised—that you'd one day be the richest citizen in the world."

She laughed, as nearly gaily as she could, and patted his cheek to imply that it was time that any emotional tension other than that of tenderness should be dropped for the night. He dropped it obediently and with an air of comfort. But still holding her and scrutinising her, he added, still half humorously:

"Perhaps, after all, the most dreadful revelation

that I ought to have made to you concerns myself. It is simply that I'm much more American than I ever pretended to be. At bottom I am: I feel it. And it was that visit to Boston that did it."

"You mean," she was beginning to ask. But his tremendous flow of eloquence had returned to him.

"At bottom," he said, "I'm tremendously American. If I dislike many of their ways it's only because I feel so intensely that at bottom they're fit for such much better things. And if I've loafed about in Europe it hasn't been from lack of interest in my own country. It's simply been because I haven't seen my way to do better. I've always wanted to do something. Tremendously!"

"I don't see why I should object to that," she said, "if all you want is to make them less odious."

"But don't you see," he said, still holding her strongly, "how much more American than you thought me this interest in America makes me? That's what I'm afraid you'll hate."

"Oh, you dear boy," she laughed. "That's what I love. I should rather hate it if you didn't take an interest in your own people. Because it would be a little mean. And if you only want to make them like us . . ." She paused, and then her affection for him gave her what she considered to be one of her flashes of inspiration. "After all one talks of Americans, but they aren't a nation. They aren't a—a race!" She faltered for a minute. "They're just eighty million individuals on a map. You're one of them. Some of them are odious, you're just a dear. You aren't an American, there aren't any

Americans. They're just people, mixed up anyhow like the passengers on this boat. And that," she had another flash, "is just what the Americans are. Passengers. And it's absurd: you wouldn't talk about the passengers on this boat being 'Kelleg liners' because they are on it, or because they've been on it for a certain time, or even because they'd been born on it. They're some of them thieves, and some of them fools, and some of them shopkeepers, and some of them counts—and there's one who's just nothing else but a dear."

It is probable that he would have applauded this philosophy by at last kissing her, but at that moment, brilliant beneath the light, with his broad bands of gold braid and his bright red face, the captain stepped out of the near doorway and stretched his chest in the night air. Catching sight of Don he remarked pleasantly that it was time to put out the lights on the decks, but if Don desired it they could be left burning a little longer. For that was one of the details of the commissariat: the owner could bear the charge of it if he wished. It wasn't like the nautical rules that no one could change.

Eleanor, however, had vanished into the doorway, and there wasn't anything left for the captain but to say that he hoped he hadn't been indiscreet in talking of owners before Miss Greville, when Don set out on his journey to the smoking-room.

He found Canzano in an evening-dress that one could call faultless, and with a foreign air of being most carefully "got up," that was as distinct from the English well-groomedness as it was from the

American well-washed appearance. It expressed itself, perhaps more than anything, in the singularly iron-trimmed appearance of his glossy black hair, in the polish of his nails that, as they rested on the table, reflected, positively, the brownish tinge of the fumed oak, and the massive ring, a signet of lapis-lazuli, upon his little finger. It had been presented to one of his grandmothers by Pius IX. for services to the Papal troops and he wore it always—he wouldn't naturally have worn a ring—as a minute but continued protest against the House of Savoy.

If he didn't stand out from the crowd of men, half Americans interested in the pool and half Germans playing an intricate card game, or from the women—all Germans—who looked on, it was perhaps as much because, in such an environment of smoke, lager-beer glasses, heavy oak galleries and pink sandwiches, it seemed impossible for any man to shine as because he had taken a very retired seat in the angle of the great oak chimneypiece and kept his face down over a journal devoted to the sport of automobiling. It added perhaps a little to Don's sense of bewilderment and discouragement that this young man who occupied a very definite place in his own mind didn't, in this place that belonged to him, stand out at all. For, for Don, Canzano represented very exactly and very shiningly the Latin temperament: he was so polished, so unconcerned, so gay, so resigned, so very definitely clear and "all there." Yet here, somehow, he seemed to sink into the general ragbag of humanity, to become merely one of them, and the train of thought led Don to notice that the Germans

weren't any longer Germans any more than the Anglo-Saxons were any longer distinctive. You seemed there to forget distinctions, so that if, by fixing your eyes very carefully upon a rather haggard man with a heavy moustache, you might say: "He's probably from Philadelphia," or if, looking carefully at another, fat, exaggeratedly distinguished, iron-grey, and with a mouth apparently as large as a frog's, standing with his hands very much in his pockets near the red-faced man in a yachting cap, who was shouting out sums in dollars, you said: "Why, he's obviously Dash, the actor, or his double!" the effort to keep your mind upon these individuals seemed to become very soon hardly worth the trouble. You were simply in a crowd in the largest, the most undistinguished and the most commonplace smoking-saloon in the world. And the trouble was that though you were in a crowd you didn't—and no one in it—seemed to belong to the crowd. It hadn't any common interest . . .

Canzano looked up from his paper and uttered:

"It really looks as if this man's claim to have discovered a new form of differential was justified. But you never can tell!"

Don slid himself into the polished leather seat beside his friend.

"Is it such a very engrossing topic?" he asked.

Canzano raised his eyebrows politely.

"It's like the new cure for cancer that the papers discover every week," he said. "It's the most important thing in the world. Think of being able to go round *any* corner without the least slackening of speed!" And his eyelids closed almost ecstatic-

ally. As suddenly, however, he raised them and regarded Don quizzically.

"Is it possible," he asked, "that my dear and excellent Don isn't interested in automobiling? Or is interested in the fate of the miserable *canaglia*—the pedestrians? Then what in the world is the most important thing in the world in *his* philosophy?"

And at Don's pause for evasion he permitted himself to continue rhapsodising, a departure from self-containment that he would never have allowed himself before any other mortal save his mother.

"Confound it," he said ironically and lightly. "By Bacchus! it's still some point of conscience with this good gentleman. Then tell me what it is that equals in real importance a new differential? How are you going to add to the sum of human sensation in any other way? Think of being able to 'speed'—as your compatriots say—down the most fearful hill in the world without the least fear of the worst corner in the world at the bottom of it. I've taken most corners in the world fairly fast. But to do them without a check! . . ."

"Then you're interested in motors?" Don asked, carefully using the British word.

"My dear chap!" Canzano remonstrated, "I'm just the same as I always was." And at Don's smile he added: "I'm still interested in killing time! An automobile is a clumsy, evilly-smelling, odious contrivance. But so are most human contrivances and nearly all the beasts that you sit on or guide—horses and women and Constituent Assemblies.

They're all a bother at one time or another, and if they go wrong you have to think yourself a fool for not having managed them better. It's so with horses: it's so with women: it's so with the pictures you used to want to paint. It's particularly so with votes and voters. Whereas an automobile . . ."

He paused and then added:

"I'll bet my hat you're interested in politics—and women. Or let's say a woman. I saw it coming in Boston—six years ago." He went off again at a tangent: "I say, I'm awfully sorry if I've given you a bad quarter of an hour." And still, before Don could get any sort of a say, he continued: "It's fellows like you who mislead the psychologist. On the face of it it wasn't any *manque de tact* to refer to your visit to Boston. After all, you can't have any considerable peccadillo to conceal in that voyage. I know it: I'll vouch for it to the lady. Heavens! Did not I meet you on the quay at New York? Didn't I take you to your father? Didn't I lead you about Boston? Didn't I accompany you to the quay and on the very voyage back? I repeat I'll go to the lady and swear to your utter innocence."

"My dear Carlo," Don said, "it's me you've got to come to and convince."

Canzano raised his eyes in a sort of blank bewilderment, and then swiftly catching at the key of this enigma uttered the words:

"Oh, if it's a question of your conscience and not her jealousy I don't volunteer." He looked at Don with incredulity, half mixed with sardonic pity.

"And you mean to say that you still possess it? You can't even yet dispense with that luxury?"

"A conscience?" Don asked, and Canzano shrugged his shoulders.

"*Oh pour cal*" he ejaculated, "we all possess that, I hope. We've all—all the benighted of the Old World got things that we don't do. No, no. It's not a conscience that you've got: it's. . . . What's the phrase? A New England Conscience? Moral nervous dyspepsia. *Chi lo sa?* No: hypochondria! The finger for ever on the pulse of your ethics!"

He resumed:

"And so the lady? An *amourette*? But no: one does not take such as that to the graveside of one's father. At least I shouldn't. But there's no knowing what will be done by moral enigmas like you."

It was at this point that the electric lights, hidden in pink globes in the roof, began to play the bewildering tricks that at sea one accepts as equivalent to the "closing time, guests, please," of the terrestrial smoking-room. Don, however, called to him a steward, and into the incredulous ear of a semi-insolent man whispered the quite peremptory command that he desired the captain informed that he desired the chief steward to inform the bar-keeper that the lights were to be kept burning till it suited him to finish his conversation.

Canzano, leaning upon one white hand, regarded him with a little smile of sardonic impertinence.

"So you have come into your kingdom?" he asked.

"Well, it's the first exercise I've made of my power," Don said.

"And how symbolical an exercise," Carlo said. "He deranges that most perfect of all things—the routine of a ship! *Ça sent bon, hein?*"

"Oh, it smells good enough," Don said. "And I hope to derange a few more routines before I've done with things."

Canzano leaned over to pat him on the back.

"My congratulations!" he said. "But have you thought of the poor stewards who must yawn and the poor wives of the Germans who must sit watching their husbands' *skat* for hours longer than it is legal for them?"

"No, I hadn't," Don said. "But one can't refine for ever."

Canzano looked at him with a sudden and radiant smile.

"My dear chap," he said, "*mon bon vieux!* It's good to hear you lay down the law in the old way."

Suddenly he touched Don's hand on the table with his little finger.

"*Mon vieux,*" he repeated, "you needn't avoid me any more . . ." And at Don's hasty, finely insincere start of negation he continued: "Oh, *là, là!* Do not tell me that you have not tried to forget me because it was disagreeable to you to remember me. Why have you never written? Why did you never seek me out? Have I not been in Paris, in London, at the University of Oxford, at the University of Bonn? Might you not have found me at any minute? Weren't there at least Christmas cards you

might have sent? Do you believe I have not understood? ”

Don got in an “ Oh, well . . . ” but Canzano was beforehand with him.

“ I can tell you the very hour the idea came to you. It had missed you in Boston (it hadn’t missed me!): but it came into your head upon the boat when we returned together. We were leaning over the rail looking at the Scillies and the idea came to you. And then, when you received your letters you pretended you had business that called you to London. What was your business? Can you pretend that you had one? Not this lady—for after six years of you it is not *such* a lady that will look at you as this one does. *Hein?* Then what was your business? To remove from your mind a disagreeable thought! ”

Canzano began again.

“ Look at me. Look at me very carefully! ” And he pushed his face forward.

Don looked instead at the ash-trays on the table.

“ I know what you mean,” he said. “ But it doesn’t seem to me to be very delicate.”

Canzano uttered a rather hard:

“ *Hein.* Then we have different ideas of delicacy we two. I say it is better to settle clearly a thing. You wish to shirk it. But then it will be always there. For obviously you *must* see my mother in Boston. It is unavoidable. She is coming down from the Berkshires for nothing else but to see you. And as for delicacy! Isn’t it your duty to satisfy yourself? Isn’t it my duty to see that you do so? For her sake! ”

It was at least Don's pleasure—it was always his habit—to let this young man conduct their conversations as he pleased. In his presence Don contracted a power to listen that anyone else, when he talked to them, had to find for themselves. He simply couldn't, in short, keep up with Canzano. And he didn't care. He had always found it so pleasant to listen to Canzano's topsy-turvy moralities that, even at meeting him again, he dropped naturally into his old indulgent part.

“And—as for indelicacy,” Canzano repeated, “I will take it upon my own shoulders: it is I who should suffer, on the point of my mother. Aren't we, you and I, in what we might call a *comité de famille*—a family council? For you can't,” he concluded, “get over the fact that—however it may be with regard to half-brothers—we're certainly step-brothers.” He reached out his hand and again touched Don's. “Then look at me minutely: scrutinise each of my features!”

He held once more his face towards Don, a little expressionlessly, as if he were sitting for a photograph. His eyes, when he wasn't using the lids for purposes of expression, were singularly large and of a dark brown: his nose was very hooked but a little flattened at the extreme tip: the hairs of his moustache ran hard and perfectly horizontal from each side of the little hollow above his lips: and between his lips themselves, in the very centre, there showed a minute gleam of white teeth: his chin, which protruded slightly, seemed to form an almost perfect globe of firm flesh, very slightly bluish with the colour of his

beard that ran up the sides of his cheeks to merge beneath the skin into the almost perfect pallor beneath his eyes and of his forehead. You couldn't, when his face was still, fix him in the least, he was one of a thousand. But when he smiled, as he did the moment Don had finished his scrutiny, you felt at once a whole number of indefinite emotions—that you could trust him to lead a forlorn hope or would pardon him for running away; that you could trust him to take your womenkind to any theatre though conceivably he might — and you would rather like him to—make a commission out of the tickets; that you could trust him to have the most gratifying excuse for missing an appointment; that he would chat gaily with any beggar on any church step or run your motor-car as gaily over the same beggar five minutes later. But you could certainly trust him to keep you entertained; to behave as if you were really lovable and important, and to despise you a little.

“Well, then,” he said at last, “of whom do I remind you?”

And Don answered with irresistible conviction:

“Of your mother!”

Canzano laughed and leant back on the leather cushions.

“You can certainly say that if I'm not a bit like my father, who looked, you probably remember, like a blonde Titian in a cowboy's hat, I look still less like *yours*, who had a nose like a gourd, the eyes of a raccoon and your—exactly your—long, low forehead.”

He put both his hands in his pockets and stretched forth his legs.

"*Tiens, mon ami,*" he said, "I too had your ideas. But I'm convinced now. After all: consider! I'm twenty-eight: you thirty-three. I don't say that my father and mother weren't in Montana prospecting just after your mother deserted your father. But it is hardly probable. I repeat, it is hardly probable. I do not wish to speak evilly of *my* father, more than is necessary. But at the time *your* father wasn't rich enough. You must remember that my father came of the Roman nobility. If they haven't anything else, they've large ideas in money matters."

"He's still in the West?" Don asked.

"He's still there," Canzano answered. "The last I heard of him was that he had married—positively married—an Indian woman. But I think it is certain that now he will come to blackmail my mother in Boston. Therefore I go to protect her. I have probably a not very pleasant interview to go through with my father."

He came out from this reflection with:

"So that, for the credit of the family, we may agree to the perfectly true facts."

Don said:

"I'm not much accustomed to considering the credit of the family." But the thought of Eleanor came into his mind.

"Why, it is all dead and gone," he said.

Canzano laughed.

"Consider before you speak," he added, "there's

a huge mass of money. Heaven knows what sums your father won't have left his widow! "

Don brushed his hand lightly across the table, as if, in brushing away the cigarette ash, he brushed away too the consideration of *that*.

"He has left money—a decent sum—to his stepson too," Canzano said.

"Oh, I don't grudge you *that*," Don answered; "you understand I quite expected you to have all my father's money."

Canzano raised his eyebrows at the statement, but he did not abandon his main line of argument.

"Let's put it then," he said, "that we're immediately concerned for the honour of the family."

Don nodded.

"And the facts, for our public conversation, are the facts exactly as they took place."

Don nodded again.

"That your mother divorced your father for incompatibilities of temper: that my mother divorced my father for infidelities innumerable: that after your mother was dead my mother married your father and that you and I are the best friends in the world."

Don considered the matter and added seriously:

"I don't see why we can't add the comment that your mother behaved very creditably in not marrying my father till my mother was actually dead."

"It certainly sounds less . . . less Transatlantic." Canzano joyfully accepted Don's offer. "But I daresay," he reflected, after an instant, "that it's really quite Italian. In a sense, I daresay, you don't

realise what it meant to my mother—she is the most wonderful woman in the world!—her marrying your father even after your mother was dead. I discussed it with her whilst you were in Boston. For, in our creed, the marriage wasn't a marriage as long as my father was alive. She risked, in fact, damnation for your father's sake. She'd have risked anything for his sake. But she wouldn't do it whilst your mother lived." He paused and added: "So that, even as your mother's son, you haven't a particular, scrupulous need to avoid either of us."

And Don nodded his head.

IV

IT was on the afternoon of the day before they were to reach New York that Mrs Greville first manifested to Eleanor any symptoms of the peculiar methods that made the rest of the family call her "so terrible." She had still upon her one of her fits of not letting servants wait on her. It had lasted from the moment she had set foot on the boat. They came on, these fits, for reasons that were difficult to discover, at irregular intervals, at periods usually the most inconvenient, and they were accepted by the rest of the family in much the same spirit as Mr Greville's habit of standing at table. And it was in the same spirit accepted by Eleanor that she must answer her aunt's call to help her in packing her cabin trunk for the landing. Large-nosed, brown-featured, emaciated, and with long, bony fingers, whose joints were large and obstructed by many rings with green, red and yellow stones and a great deal of gold, Aunt Emmeline was constitutionally incapable of folding a dress or of making anything "go in" anywhere. At the same time, under the obsessions of her particular disease, she had the theory that when a maid packed your trunk you could never, for ever after, find anything that you happened to want. So that it became the duty of her relations to perform these services under her eyes,

and it was whilst Eleanor, in the white, hopelessly-encumbered berth, was taking down a black silk petticoat from an electric light globe, where it hung, obscuring the view of a panel representing a very thin Orpheus raising his hand towards a highly-draped Eurydice, that her aunt brought out:

“I wonder dear Don doesn’t notice the way you behave with Augustus!”

Eleanor had both her hands engaged with the violet tape bindings of the petticoat, and she had in her mouth a turquoise brooch, which she had rescued from the hem where her aunt had stuck it, and which, for the moment, she dared not put down anywhere. It would be certainly lost. It was not therefore till she had folded the skirt in the tray that lay on the red satin counterpane, and having removed the brooch from her mouth had begun to search for her aunt’s jewel-case, which she found eventually beneath the very red mahogany cover of the green marble wash-hand stand, that she had time to answer:

“I do think you might understand that I won’t say anything against Augustus to Don!”

Mrs Greville leaned back upon the green velvet of the sofa, opened her eyes to an extraordinary size, and having angrily ejaculated: “You’re treading on the photograph of the Cathedral! How can you be so clumsy?” she brought out with a pained expression:

“I never knew you to be disingenuous before. I’ve long had cause to consider you vain.”

At that moment, with some of the feeling of triumph that one has when one finds the thimble that a child, in the game, hides in unlikely places, Eleanor

had lifted up the lid of the wash-hand stand. The problem then presented itself to her as to where she should place the jewel-case for safety; she couldn't pack it, because her aunt would need all her jewels that evening. It was as much because this problem occupied her mind as because she couldn't exactly understand what her aunt meant, or because she had any desire to irritate her by not retorting, that she retained a silence than which nothing could have been more irritating.

"I might call it by a worse name than vanity," her aunt continued slowly; and again uttering the remark that Eleanor was standing on the photograph of her Cathedral, she continued: "It's my duty to speak to you though I'm sure it's distasteful. But dear Don is so patient and your father so obtuse that there's no one else to do it."

Eleanor—who had decided that, upon the whole, the basin was the best place for the jewels—remembered at this point that it was a family practice to try not to be irritated by what Aunt Emmeline said. For Aunt Emmeline had, besides the actual purport of her words, a power in her voice, in her whole bearing, to depress, or render frantic, most members of her family. And it was with just a heightening of her tone that she said:

"Don's patient enough to put up with Augustus or anybody else. And I've told you that I certainly shan't run down Augustus to him."

She resumed command of her temper with a strong hand, and turned to consider the problem of how she should get rid of an ounce of face powder that her

aunt had upset into one of her bedroom slippers. Her aunt didn't raise her voice; she didn't adopt any of the majestic gestures which sometimes marked her less serious emotions of indignation. Instead, she slowly shook her head and drew a deep breath.

"When you've learnt as much of men as I have," she said, "you'll know that these quiet and patient men are the most vindictive in the world if they're once roused." She leant forward. "You think you can do what you like with him, but you'll find that when he does act he'll be terribly revengeful." And at this point she even stretched out her hand. "You'll ruin us all: Augustus, me, your father—who can't really afford this voyage—yourself, for you can't ever expect at your age to make another match. And the poor young man himself. Heaven knows what he might not do! You know what terrible things these American millionaires' sons are capable of!"

This struck Eleanor as a view so bizarre of Don's character that she couldn't help saying:

"Oh, you'd hardly notice that Don was a millionaire's son at all!"

And the smile brought it upon her in full force; her aunt even leant forward to pick up the photograph that Eleanor still stood upon. Dusting it carefully with her handkerchief, Mrs Greville held the pasteboard extended at the end of her bony fingers with the great rings.

"That's a specimen of it!" she continued. "That's a specimen of the way you and Augustus—all young people of to-day—trample upon the finer

feelings!" Would *she*, she continued, as a child, have trampled upon the picture of her almost mother's beloved home? Yet she verily believed that Augustus would applaud Eleanor for doing it! And she asked what Augustus was doing at that moment. He ought to have been there, in the cabin, helping her to pack. What had become of the feelings of young people for their elders? What had become of the very feeling of the family? Did Augustus wait upon his mother as he ought to? No: he was dangling after the first petticoat that came across him! She ought to have tender reverence from her children, for, after all, wasn't she all the mother that Eleanor had had for the last ten years. But both Augustus and she thought that she was to be fobbed off with servants! Servants were good enough for her! Any woman was good enough to pack her things. They did not—Eleanor and Augustus—in the least seem to see that it was their duty to set a good example to the people they were travelling among. What would these Americans think of them when they saw that Augustus hardly ever tucked the rugs round his mother's feet? He hadn't once, since he'd been on the ship, brought her her cup of chocolate in the morning as he'd been accustomed to ever since he was a boy. It was as much as he'd do if he sat beside her chair and read to her from lunch till tea . . .

"He's travelling after all as Don's solicitor." Eleanor felt at last impelled to defend poor Augustus, for whose poor aching legs she felt a sympathetic twinge at the thought of the number of times they

had been used in descending from the topmost deck to fetch her aunt's vinaigrette.

"Then why doesn't he remember it?" her aunt fixed her with. "He finds time enough to dance after you!"

And Mrs Greville gained so much strength from that retort that she was able to continue without even taking a breath.

"He talks to you all through meals: he's got his eye on you all the rest of the time. He answers me in the most vacant manner, as if I weren't worth listening to. I've had to ask waiters—paid servants—to fetch me cups of tea."

"I wish to goodness," Eleanor said—she had by now cleared the cabin of almost everything that could be tidied—"I wish to goodness you'd take him over to your side of the table. He worries me where he is."

Mrs Greville swiftly erected her neck and her voice became deep.

"Never in my life would I do such a thing!" she said. "No one can ever accuse me of having been exacting. If people's affections won't induce them to serve me I despise their services." Eleanor had, at this point, succeeded in tearing one of her aunt's hair nets, which Mrs Greville had rather elaborately entangled in the fretwork above the mirror, whilst uttering a gasp of exasperation her aunt managed to continue speaking. (The spoilt hair net was a thing you could return to.) "It has been a firm principle throughout my life to leave everyone their freedom. You have never heard me speak of

family 'ties'! I would no more think of commanding Augustus to do his duty and sit—as he certainly ought—beside me instead of you, than . . .”

Eleanor had succeeded in drawing one of her aunt's hairs from an untidy bunch in a tidy, and holding it between two fingers, with her head sedulously bent above the invisible filaments, she was beginning the task of repairing the rent. So that it was almost more than her aunt could bear—it gave Eleanor such an air of throwing off a repartee with incredible ease—when she heard the girl utter:

“Then why do you make it so extremely unpleasant for *me* when he doesn't attend to his 'ties'?”

Aunt Emmeline's jaw dropped so wide that the gold plate inside her lower teeth shone bizarrely in a chance ray of sunlight which pierced an eyelet hole in the canvas screen outside, shot through the port-hole, impinged on the mirror, and struck back into Aunt Emmeline's mouth. She paused silently for fully two seconds, whilst Eleanor held the hair net up to the light, cut off an invisible end with minute scissors, and again began her operations on a place that her aunt had torn the night before.

“Eleanor, my child,” her aunt uttered in a hollow and emotional tone of great tenderness, “this is very serious. Have you never considered that you belonged to a very distinguished family? Let me give you a little lesson. We are only women, but women have been listened to when they spoke from their proper places!” And with a voice full of tender concern, as of one speaking to a Magdalen, she entreated Eleanor to listen to her views of what the

family relationship should be. It was founded upon Love: a fact to which she returned several times. And in the tones of her voice she seemed to be inviting Eleanor to return to a family fold whose canons she had outraged. However, by the time that Eleanor, having finished the hair net, and having found nothing more that she could pack away, had come to an erect position with her hands folded before her, Mrs Greville had once more diverged upon the fact that they were the only English on board. And Mrs Greville in particular was much observed—so that Eleanor's behaviour too might at times be noticed.

"And let me repeat," Mrs Greville prepared to approach her peroration, "that you and Augustus have neglected your duty to your family in a way that I should have deemed incredible in a family like ours. For, when they haven't been able to be distinguished, the Grevilles have never been noticeable. They've never been eccentric: they've behaved like a representative English family." She repeated, however, that Eleanor and Augustus had shocked her. They hadn't remembered, apparently, one of these things. She herself, Mrs Greville herself, had made sacrifices for Augustus that no one else would ever understand: even Eleanor's father had made sacrifices for Eleanor. If Eleanor didn't succeed in bringing off this marriage Mr Greville would undoubtedly suffer in pocket for the rest of his career. And let Eleanor remember what would become of her aunt if Don should repudiate the engagement!

Eleanor's face—it was the first unoccupied

moment she had had in which really to attend to her aunt's words—assumed a gradual expression of incredulity that a little stiffened the fine curves of her cheek, so that she had the air of listening to sounds from a distance.

“As I've so much at stake,” Mrs Greville said, “I keep myself informed of the course of the market twice a day!” And she pulled out from the watch-pocket in her breast the buff-paper slip of a wireless telegram: “Kellegs are falling—and falling, and falling. I don't know what it means. But dear Don has lent me the money to go on covering the deficit. He seems to regard it as a moral responsibility to do so. He insisted that I should take the money. Do you realise what it means for me if you and Augustus should cause him to grow vindictive? Do you realise that I—I—shall be left without a penny? I *must* go on till these shares rise. I *must*. I *must*. If you actually insist on flirting with Augustus: if you can't do without him at your skirts: for God's sake have the decency to wait until I'm safely out of this hole.”

Eleanor's eyes had grown larger and larger.

“You mean,” she asked, “that I'm not to let Don see me flirt with Augustus till he's lent you all the money you want?”

“I shall be ruined if Don turns against me now!” her aunt answered.

Eleanor uttered a slow: “Then all I can say is . . .” and hesitating whether to let her aunt have it or not, she couldn't at last think it was right to spare her and she finished:

“ You’re so ridiculously jealous of Oggie that you’re a little mad at times. Why, if you were a childless wife you couldn’t be worse. You’ve had the poor boy so tied to your skirts that it’s no wonder he’s as ridiculous as he is. And, goodness only knows, it isn’t easy for him to give you cause for jealousy. Why, he says himself that not a woman will look at him! ”

Her aunt had dropped her tone of affectionate entreaty: she passed now even through the phase of paralysed indignation and came out into what Eleanor in her own mind was accustomed to call her snaky chill. She sat up rigidly, but her eyes looked at the floor which still, on its green, velvety pile, had large traces of face powder, and all she uttered was:

“ You surpass even *yourself* ! ”

“ I can’t help it, Aunt Emmeline,” Eleanor said, and she was vaguely aware that she would have liked to say: “ It hurts me quite as much as it hurts you—but it’s for your own good.” She continued however: “ I’m perfectly certain that Don’s entirely satisfied with my behaviour,” and at her aunt’s virulent titter: “ I’m perfectly satisfied with my own behaviour. Augustus is a nuisance. I’m just civil to him and that’s an end of it! ”

It is possible that if Aunt Emmeline had actually been a Greville Eleanor would not have spoken. It was, probably, because she wasn’t and had arrogated to herself that title that she had finally been goaded to speak. She had married a Greville—Eleanor’s uncle—but she was only a Corbyn; and it

wasn't for a Corbyn to tell a Greville how a Greville should behave beneath the eyes of Americans. And going along the corridors towards the outer air Eleanor smiled to herself. She hadn't found that the Americans troubled themselves much even about a Greville! For positively a lady who had laid herself in the deck-chair next her own that morning had asked whether her father were not a Graecher from Indianapolis! The Graechers were noted for saying inordinately long graces, and she had taken Mr Greville's habit of standing during the soup course, for some sort of religious exercise; she had also taken his long frock-coat for some sort of deacon's uniform. And again Eleanor had had to smile when she replied that her father was not an American, was not a Graecher, was not a deacon or priest of any kind, but just a plain, ordinary English gentleman. It certainly was, it struck her, a very extraordinary thing to do. But then nearly everybody she knew was a little extraordinary. After all, couldn't plain, good English people afford to be so?

Whilst she sat, perched on a white life-raft, on the top deck, as if on a sort of island, with Don and two young girls and a young man in a blue serge jumper playing deck-golf round her feet, she kept up a long conversation with Canzano about dancing, and in her private thoughts justified herself for having "spoken" to her aunt.

"After all," Canzano would say—and she noticed that his white, duck-twill hat threw white reflections on to his smooth, olive cheeks—"it's a foolish exercise

to dance. Yes. And you are limp all next day. Yes. But a dead emotion is a tremendously precious thing."

The sea all round them was boundlessly blue and hard: the air all round them was dry and crisp: the young men and young girls pushed broom-handles about the deck as if they were sweeping ice, and the continual click of the Marconi spark beneath their feet seemed to her the dominating sound. Canzano lay on his back beside her, his hands behind his head when she answered him, but each time that he spoke he rolled over on his elbow to see her. His canvas shoes were of an extravagant whiteness.

"I hate dead emotions," Eleanor said. And the more she thought about it the more she was certain that in speaking to her aunt she had done exactly what was right. She had had to act. You couldn't let people continue to behave as her aunt had begun. And it wasn't as if this were a thing she could pass over—as she had done all the former disagreeableness of her aunt. Formerly she had kept her and her son at a distance. It had been quite easy. Now that Don had brought them all, rather extravagantly, together she had *had* to put them in their places. And it came into her head that at the very beginning she had told Augustus that it was only fair to let people know how they stood. If she had let her aunt imagine that she was going to be able to go on as she had begun it would be unfair, too . . .

"Dead emotions!" Canzano rolled himself onto his side to say: "You can allege that you hate them! But what else is there in life? Do you think you'll

ever be as happy as you were at some ball?—(when was it? Last year—the year before last? How do I know?) But on the night when you had, as the saying here is, the time of your life. Do you think that to-night—or any other night—the band will play as it played on *that* night? Do you ever expect—do you ever find—your anticipations come up to your memories? ”

Eleanor looked reflectively down into his eyes.

“ I’m afraid you’re a pessimist,” she said. And she returned again to her thoughts. She was glad that she had spoken to her aunt. It had put them all into their proper places. And she had meant for years to speak a word for poor Augustus. If he were—and he was very nearly—a miserable little wretch, it was, she hadn’t the least doubt, entirely the fault of his mother’s miserable jealousy. Her aunt had never even let him think a thought that was different from her own. And the poor boy had never had even the physical strength to stand up against his mother—not the voice, the mere lung power. He had always had sick headaches, neuralgias—she couldn’t think of anything more miserable than to have neuralgia and to be told by Aunt Emmeline that one was free to do what one liked. Free! He hadn’t even been free to change his newspaper. He wasn’t now! If only she had done him a good turn. . . . At anyrate she had taken her own line!

Canzano, in the meantime, had sprung into a sitting posture beside her, with a motion so sharp that his white shoes had performed against the blue of the sea a flashing parabola.

"A pessimist. I! *Jamais de la vie!*" he said. "My dear half-sister! Don't imagine that I'm the sort of person that your Don oughtn't to have to do with. I shan't spoil him."

"You couldn't, you know, anyhow," Eleanor laughed. "Nothing could!"

Don looked up from his broom-handle at the moment and embraced the two of them in his fine and friendly smile.

"We're winning all along the line," he called out. "Five up and seven."

"Ah, he'd be the biggest creature in the world if he wasn't a poet," Canzano uttered to her. He drew up his knees to the level of his chin that his feet might avoid the slide of a leaden disk. "But I want you to examine me carefully so that you mayn't find it necessary to forbid him to know me."

Eleanor said:

"Oh, *he's* free enough."

"Who is not?" Canzano asked; and as she didn't answer he continued: "Don't think I'm a pessimist if I tell you to treasure your dead emotions. They're the best things we've got. I'm a person who savours life: I enjoy it immensely. It's a good world: there's a good sun in the sky. It's all good. But isn't it made immensely better because of such good memories as you've got?"

Eleanor said that for herself she looked forward, but he shook his head.

"If you did you'd be much more masculine than feminine. And I can't believe you are. Women almost always look back: men of action always look

forward. Now I'm a man—God forbid that I should say of taste—but one who lives to taste life. So I've got the taste of the past still in my mouth and the taste of the present on my lips."

Eleanor looked at him seriously, with wide eyes and with a certain affection, because he was such a very good friend of Don's.

"I believe," she uttered, "that it would be a very good thing for some people"—and her eyes sought Don's figure—"if they had a little of your philosophy."

Canzano stretched himself a little, looked at his white shoes and rested an elbow upon the life-raft.

"By avoiding unpleasant things I find that life is very good," he continued his own speech.

"Well," she answered him humorously, "I don't find life at all troublesome."

"You're perfectly happy?" and he surveyed her with a pleasant incredulity.

"I'm perfectly—happy," she answered, and she glanced at the dark blue sea, at the light blue sky, at Don, at the deck quoits and the volume of smoke that blew away to their right.

"Don't you worry?" he asked, with the incredulity still in his voice.

"I don't know what worry is," she answered him confidently. "If you know what your duty is it's simple to do it."

He mused:

"Well, well: it's simpler to avoid it! But still . . ."

He looked at her unfurrowed, fresh cheeks; at her

unruffled, full figure; at her brown, round and confident eyes, and she made upon him such a full impression of tranquillity, of opulence and strength that he said:

"I don't think I've ever really known any of your countrywomen, or are you an exception?"

Eleanor looked at her shoulders.

"Of course," she answered, "I am open to receive compliments. But I'm not in the least exceptional, mentally. In my class there are thousands like me."

"One sees you, you know," he said, "in droves all round our monuments—in Italy I'm speaking of—with red books and anxious faces and bags slung round their necks by straps."

"Oh," she answered seriously, "I don't think that the ones with red books and anxious faces are of my class at all—and I'm absolutely certain that the ones with bags aren't even my countrywomen."

"They *speak* English, you know," he said.

"Even that's a matter of opinion," she answered him.

He reflected gaily for a moment, appearing to dig the tip of his nose into his moustache, and gazing down it as if for the sheer pleasure of the contemplation.

"So that," he arrived at his conclusion, "you're, according to your own showing, at least as wise as I. You have at least as good a time—and you do, in addition, your duty. That, no doubt," he started again, clasping the striped cuff of one wrist with a delicate, long-haired hand, "that, no doubt, gives you an excellent appetite for dinner."

"Why," Eleanor said, and she laughed, "I'm as unromantic as you could wish. Sound wind and limb."

He suddenly removed his white hat.

"And what in the world," he said, "can be more romantic than a beautiful woman with a good appetite, if she can tell good food from bad? And I hope you're serious about that."

"Oh, I like the best of everything," Eleanor said, and she added, with her eyes on Don, who at that moment was waving his hand to induce a coy disk to glide faster along the deck, "I generally get it!"

"Heavens, what an idyll!" he uttered. "The best of everything and you haven't a care."

"I certainly haven't a care," she answered, "unless. . . ." And he caught her up swiftly with the word repeated interrogatively: "Unless it's Don's too great scrupulousness."

"Oh, don't say anything against *him*!" he uttered. "He's the best creature in the world."

She thanked him with her eyes for that praise and continued:

"It's only at close quarters—in the family, as you might say—that he's apt to create worries."

"But, my dear," he said, figuring astonishment, "don't *I* know all about it? Hasn't he been in *my* family for years. And, believe me, my step-brother has cleared all the worries out of my path."

She said:

"Do you use the word step-brother seriously?" And through a sort of bewilderment the suspicion that she'd had all along—though she hadn't felt called

upon to question Don, and Don hadn't enlightened her—the suspicion took a firm hold upon her.

It gave him the opening that, quite desultorily, he had been angling for, and his story put together all the little bits of material that she had noted for herself.

"I think Don has acted quite rightly in letting *you* tell me," she said, as she gave him her hand to acknowledge his brotherhood. "After all, it was *your* story." And he answered:

"You can't tell how we all—my mother and I—adore Don, and you'll find out," he added, "that whenever Don does act—if it's not very often—he invariably does do the right thing. He does more than the right thing. He's princely: he's sublime."

"Oh, come!" Eleanor said with delight.

"It's perfectly true," Canzano answered. "He gives blank cheques. You haven't yet learned what a gallant thing the American spirit is at its best!"

"I'm only wanting to learn," she answered him.

But he had dropped his enthusiasm, and along with it his figures of speech.

"I don't know," he said, and he lowered his voice, "if Don exactly knows how he'll stand—I mean financially—*vis-à-vis* of my mother and me."

"Do you think you ought to tell me," she asked, "if he doesn't know?"

"I don't know that I *know* myself," he said. "I think we may discuss it because we both love him. I leave it to you to break it to him or to leave it to my mother. But I'm pretty certain that his father

won't have left him much chance to smash up his—his nefarious affairs."

Eleanor opened her eyes.

"You mean," she said, "that we shan't be so fabulously rich."

"Oh," he answered, "you'll be fabulously rich. But I fancy Don won't be able to throw his bombs into the House that Jack Built."

Eleanor heaved a deep sigh. "Poor Don!" she said, and then: "But I daresay we shall be able to find out a way!"

It was his turn to open his eyes.

"You sympathise with his ideas?" he asked.

And Eleanor answered, with a perfect candour:

"I don't know what his ideas are. I don't know that he knows himself. But I want him to be able to do what he wants to do—when he finds out what it is."

Canzano heaved a rather ludicrous sigh.

"How like a woman!" he said. "I don't believe *they* differ whether they're American, or English, or Italian!"

V

IT was upon that same life-raft in the moonlight, six hours later, that Eleanor suddenly felt herself clasped violently in a man's arms and kissed on the forehead, the cheeks, the lips, on the very eyes. She didn't need, considering the tense feel of the arms, the hungry violence of the lips, to be told that it wasn't Don. Instead, his face bluish and shadowed in the moonlight, the whites of his eyes glistening, his moustache ends drawn back like an angry cat's, she saw Augustus. He said, with a harsh, jaunty misery:

"I don't care."

She felt the seat on which she was sitting as if to be quite certain that her senses didn't deceive her. And then she uttered, without recoiling or moving, simply the words:

"Ah, something will have to be done to settle you in your place too." And she wasn't, after the first instant, particularly perturbed. It didn't seem that the violence really concerned her.

"I don't care!" he said again. "I don't care what any one can do. I'm at the end of my tether."

"You haven't been drinking?" she asked.

"No," he answered harshly, "I've been listening to mother!"

Eleanor said:

"Oh, if it's that . . ."

"She's been telling me that you said I was odious and contemptible and that no woman would ever look at me. So that I don't care any longer."

Eleanor nerved herself to put into order a strand of hair that she felt was loose upon her neck.

"Hadn't you got the sense to see that she was simply trying to drive you mad?" she said hardly. "You *are* an idiot."

Augustus had an air of settling down on his heels and folding his arms.

"You didn't say those things?" he almost grunted.

"I didn't say them because I don't think them," she answered. "I think she has bullied you till you're no better than a baby. I told her that I was trying to stand up for you, not to run you down. I *do* think her jealousy has ruined your life."

He took an odd little step forward.

"Ellie!" he said.

"Well, of course I was standing up for you," she said. "Do you think I'd run you down except to your face?"

He made an extraordinary expiration of his breath.

"You are such a *silly* sort of fool, Oggie," she said regretfully. "Of course, I'm not going to take you and this seriously."

He understood her well enough to grunt out:

"You think it would be flattering me?"

"It would be flattering you," she repeated simply. "Besides, I won't have scenes and situations and things. I don't like them and I won't have them."

He looked at the moon that washed all the white

wood with a tranquil splendour. It left, beneath the swinging boats, great gouts of black shadow, and left the ocean all around them a heaving black shadow itself. And it was referring to their solitude, to his violent passion and the moonlight, that he said sardonically:

"Don't you call *this* 'a scene or a situation or a thing'?"

She said, without any shadow of emotion:

"Oh, I know what I'm about, Oggie. I'm perfectly able to take care of myself where you're concerned. It would only be a scene if I weren't."

He couldn't, from the position of the moon, see her face other than shadowily, and he brought out:

"You aren't even angry with me."

It did not at that moment suit her to say how she felt, and all she vouchsafed was:

"If you like to apologise to me you may. But it isn't necessary, I suppose, between cousins. You'd lost your temper."

And she proved to her own satisfaction that she knew pretty well how to handle Augustus when a sort of barrier seemed to be swept away in him.

"Ellie!" he brought out in a deep tone that was astonishing in such a little person, "I've not acted badly upon the whole. I haven't, I haven't. You can't say I have."

"I'm not saying you have," she answered a little coldly.

"You don't know what it is," he said, "you haven't any means of knowing. You never cared for anyone. Why, I never have a minute's rest:

I'm thinking of you every minute of the day. It's hell. When I wake up in the morning I've two minutes of tranquillity—of not thinking of anything. And then it begins . . .”

“Oggie dear,” she said softly, “oughtn't a man—a man of our class—to be less a slave of his passions?”

“Oh, you intolerable woman!” he brought out like a curse: “one is, or one isn't. Do you suppose I *want* to love you? I'd give my eyesight and my hearing and my taste and my touch not to care for you. Do you suppose I am 'indulging' in something? Why, you talk like a temperance reformer telling a sot to abstain from drink. I'm not drinking, am I? I don't get any pleasure out of it.”

“Well, Oggie dear,” she said, “I'm not blaming you. I asked you a question. I don't know how men are made. I thought you ought to be able to find distractions.”

“Distractions!” he said, with violent contempt. “What's to distract me? If the only thing that is interesting is you, what else is to interest me? And how is one to be distracted without being interested?”

“Then I don't see what's to be done,” she said. She sat still, rather depressed, looking at the paste buckles on her shoe that, in the moonlight, shot direful rays at her eyes as the boat swayed a little. “I'm sorry for you. But I can't mend anything.”

“Yes, I know you're sorry,” he said, “you've been very decent to me.”

An odd, draped, white object poked itself from the hatchway beside them, and in the pale stillness had

a ghostly semblance of pricking up fantastic ears.

Augustus's voice hissed out:

"I see you, mother. Come and listen if you want to listen. But, by God, you're driving me to suicide. It's as much murder as if you put arsenic in my toast." He was shaking violently in his dancing slippers, his face grew even bluer in tinge. And accompanied by a deep exasperation from Augustus the figure turned its face towards them and then slowly disappeared below the level of the deck. His mother had gone to find Don.

"No, I haven't." Augustus plunged straight back into his speech. "I haven't behaved badly. Considering what I've had to put up with. I've kept out of your way a good deal at times. Haven't I? And think of what it's been. Think of what I've had to bear from those two—your Don and my mother. There's the one of them chasing me about with remedies for sea-sickness, and the other continually yelping that I'm ruining myself, and you, and her, and all the family."

"Poor old Oggie!" Eleanor said, and she had the image of her aunt before her eyes.

"Oh, I'm used to mother," he said. "All my life she's tried to separate me from everybody that I've ever liked. Bad influences she called them. But that other ass . . ."

"Don's been unspeakably good to you, Oggie," she said.

"Sea-sickness!" he snarled out. "Yes, he's tried to give me bromide and brandy and patent

mixtures; when I've tried to get away into dark holes—when I've almost found a little forgetfulness—he's come blundering after me. Oh, yes: usually just after even mother has had the decency to leave me alone, he's come along and begged me to be 'sociable.' He's come along and told me to talk—even to *you*! On the very second night I'd got as far as I could from you, as far as it's possible on this rat trap—right out by the flag-staff at the stern—and I was counting the revolutions of the thing they've got in the patent log and forgetting. And then I feel him tapping at my elbow and telling me to come where the vessel doesn't move so much—to come where it's more cheerful!"

He sighed with an utter exasperation.

"Funny, isn't it?" He used a little Cockney trick of phrase that he had caught from one of his clerks. "That fellow with his ownerships. He owns the ship: I expect he thinks he owns the sea and the sky and the smoke after it's come out of the funnels. And he owns me too. And he runs along and bleats: '*Here, don't be sea-sick, come and be cheerful seeing me own her! It'll do you good! I've got her . . .*'"

Eleanor said:

"Oh, I know all that part of it, Oggie."

"Funny, *isn't* it?" he repeated. "What have I got?—*what* have I got to look forward to? Mother, I suppose. And nothing else in the world. And I'm tied up to that fool, and he can't even let me be miserable in my own way. I expect that's what his wretched factory employees will say when he has

improved their conditions—that he can't let *them* be miserable in their own way . . .” Eleanor interrupted him again with:

“Now, Oggie dear, drop it. What did you come for if you take it like this?”

He snorted at her with astonishing vivacity:

“To see you grow sick of him and to catch you at the rebound. I wasn't going to let you go away with him right over the world and not be on the spot.”

She said:

“You see, you haven't the least chance. You'd much better do what you're paid for and behave like a man.”

“Well,” he answered, “I can. I have till this moment. I should have gone on but for mother.”

She answered:

“You ought to have been able to see through your mother's manoeuvres.”

He ran his hand over his eyes.

“How could I tell?” he said. “Of course I ought to have. But you don't know how it blinds a man. I'll tell you plainly that when mother told me you'd told her that you despised me—why—I went frantic. . . . I was going over the side . . .”

“It was rather silly to want to make me hate you before you did it,” Eleanor said.

Augustus suddenly sprang back. The voice of Don was heard from the hatchway saying that indeed the moon *was* a glorious sight and he ought to be ever so thankful to Mrs Greville for telling him to bring her up there. And their figures loomed in the moonlight just before Eleanor's face.

Eleanor didn't move. Mrs Greville was panting a little and there was a victorious smile on her face that the moon hardened.

Eleanor said :

"Don dear, I wish you'd take Aunt Emmeline away for a minute or two. I'm just talking to Oggie."

Whilst Don obediently turned upon his heel, Mrs Greville brought out, with a high, snickering voice :

"Oh, can't even *we* share this wonderful secret? " She began indeed to pant a little with the speed she had made in finding Don.

Eleanor said, with a touch of disdain :

"It is not a *wonderful* secret. It's something I'm arranging with Augustus."

She moved her hand a little as if she were brushing dust away from her dress. She left it in fact to her aunt to ruin her son if she wanted to. And with an extraordinarily hateful :

"Oh, one would think . . ." and a sudden gulp for breath, Mrs Greville clutched Don's arm and they faded away into the distance.

"It's got to be arranged, Oggie," Eleanor said, speaking in a swift, low voice. "And I don't want to have to speak again. I don't want to have to ruin your prospects—but I shall have to if you're going to misbehave. You may take it that I shouldn't abuse you to your mother or to anyone else. I'm far too sorry for you. If you can behave in the future I'll take what's past as the sort of ill temper that one's got to expect from one's relations

—a silly display. But it's not to happen again. I'm not going to be worried. And I'm not going to have anyone else worried, except Aunt Emmeline, who has only herself to answer to if she's miserable. Of course I'm fond of you. Of course I want Don's good fortune to help you if it can. But it ends there, and you've got to understand that . . .”

“Ah, you've a talent for arranging things,” Augustus said—and for a moment he felt an extraordinary relief. It was the definite relief of a man whose life had been reprieved—for he had been perfectly resolved, as he had said, “to go over the side.” He would have been there at that moment. And an extraordinary medley of joyous feelings raged in his brain—so that he wanted to sing.

“It is not,” she said, “that I've a talent for arranging things. It is simply that I'm determined to have around me the sort of things that are capable of arranging themselves!”

In his gladness he brought out with a laugh:

“You don't think I'm a sort of thing that is capable of arranging itself.”

She answered:

“If I didn't hope it—if I didn't think that you'd have a chance of becoming a decent being when Don's taken you away from Aunt Emmeline I shouldn't be here.”

He reflected for a moment:

“You think that when Don leaves me in America to look after his affairs I shall turn into an—an English gentleman?” he asked half sardonically.

"I hope," she retorted, "that you'll have a chance to grow up—and take it."

And whilst he still reflected she added:

"I *won't* have scenes: I won't have ourselves made noticeable. No Grevilles that counted have ever been noticeable. I won't have my father worried: I won't have Don worried: I won't be worried myself."

"So you won't tell Don about this night."

She reflected for a moment:

"No," she said at last; "if I couldn't take care of myself I'd tell him. If it would do any good I'd tell him. But I think it was all a silly freak: it's not a matter of the least importance."

He too was silent for a minute and then he said:

"By Heavens, I'd like him to know. It would gall even his self-complacency."

"It is precisely because of that that I shan't tell him," Eleanor said. "You'd like to sacrifice your position and all you'll probably ever be worth for the chance of hurting his feelings. It probably would hurt his feelings. If telling him would undo it, I'd tell him. But your kiss is irrevocable—and just because it's irrevocable I choose to regard it as unimportant. If I liked to consider it worth making a fuss about, it would be important. But it doesn't dishonour *me*—and if I like to look at it as the unimportant act of an oaf—why, that's your punishment. You've kissed me at good-morning and good-night often enough when we were children. It's *not* a great achievement to have done it again, so don't look upon it as a feather in your cap!"

She felt a sudden, rather inexplicable anger rising in her. Now that she had explained for herself as for him that it *was* unimportant, there was coming upon her a strong feeling of the indignity she had suffered. And because she never liked to speak bitter words she said suddenly that he'd better go now . . .

And because, too, she felt in need of some tenderness it distressed her to find that on the lee side of the deck-house, where her aunt and Don were ensconced in darkness, there was also Canzano, smoking his last cigar of the day. Her aunt indeed rustled silently away at the first showing of Eleanor's cloak round the house-side, but Canzano stayed, smoking and talking softly and mellowly about the glory of the immense moon, about the warmth of the Gulf Stream that they had dipped into for a few hours, about the goodness of the band whose soft strains reached them on that side of the deck.

Nevertheless, sitting close to Don upon another life-raft that had been arranged to take the form of a garden seat, she did feel a pervasion of her spirit by lassitude and satisfaction. They could feel the immense vessel as it seemed to soar through the night: the air was very warm and, where the light waves broke, there was, even in the moonlight, a glow of phosphorescence. She had set her aunt in her place: she had settled Augustus. The outbreak had been bound to come, now it was over and done with. It seemed to her as if, having done her duty, she might now rest, and her limbs felt filled with a soft warmth, a good and pleasant heaviness. So

that when, after a decent interval, Canzano drifted away she let her head rest against her lover's shoulder and, looking at the track of the moon through the spidery railings that swayed very slowly, she listened to his pleasant talk . . .

On the morrow their real life work would begin, he said. And, as if it were miles high, towering above the masts of the ship, New York seemed to be just on the horizon. . . . And to think, he said, that he should be about to attack his problems with her at his side! They were, all of them, such a united and tranquil band. It wouldn't be easy—but it would be just good hard work. Things after all would be simpler there, and since he would have her with him there wouldn't be any uprooting or any pain.

And he began to mingle little definite plans with the broad forecast. Augustus was to be detailed to make a study of just what his resources were. He himself wasn't much good at that: but Augustus would have to see how things were run in the offices and give him a bird's-eye view of the whole. And he himself would study, as best he could, the conditions of life. He was going to visit schools and workshops, factories and large stables. He had made some useful acquaintances on board—an inspector of schools with a German name and an entertaining Irishman who seemed to know all the slums in every city in the States. And she herself could go with him as much as she liked, and her father. Or there were all sorts of pleasant sights for her to see, and quite nice people, whilst he was

at work. Assuredly life wasn't going to be dull for them . . .

The moon sank a little towards the bow of the ship: the air seemed to grow warmer: the ship's bells rang out in little dings, in sonorous notes that were echoed from fore and aft: the last sounds of the band died away over the moonlit stretches and there was nothing save the pervading rustle of the waters . . .

From time to time she kissed his shoulder upon which her cheek rested, and she whispered:

"You're a dear! A dear! A dear! A dear! A dear! . . ."

He held her in his arms and once he kissed her on the forehead and whispered that he thought of her as a Papist thinks of his saints . . .

But when, in her cabin, between the cool sheets, she had turned out the light, there came to her the dreadful thought that Augustus might, at that moment, have been, wet and ghastly, somewhere in the miles and miles of water behind them. And she felt on her face, on her lips, on her eyelids, the hungry warmth of his kisses. It was so disagreeable, the one vision, and it was so strange that the feeling was not more disagreeable, that for quite a long time she could not turn upon her side to sleep. She rose at last, and kneeling upon her bed looked out of her port-hole. The ship's bells were answering each other again. And suddenly, in the light of the moon, she saw a man's figure, black and indistinct, leaning against the rail and looking towards her. She thought she could recognise Augustus,

and with a feeling now of pure dislike for the hungry and the outcast—such as the rich and the wealthy feel—she lay down once more and pulled the linen to her face. She fell asleep wondering how Don would be behaving if she had refused herself to him.

PART III

THE SOLID LAND

I

IT was odd how bustle seemed to pervade the ship. You couldn't tell how. It showed itself most in the emptiness of the decks when she stepped out of her door in the morning, in the engrossed air of hastening passengers, listening deck stewards, in the fact that no one turned on their heel at the corners as they had been wont to do. They seemed, instead, to be all bent upon errands. It was extraordinary, too, how tepid the air was, how pervaded by a mist of a new yellow colour. The ship seemed to be speeding through a mill-pond of yellow satin, and the peopled nature of the highway made itself manifest in a train of tugs drawing each six or seven black, long cylinders almost awash in the tepid waves. It wasn't like being in a hothouse exactly, but it wasn't at all like being anywhere out of doors that she had experienced, and it was with an abiding sense of oddness that she heard Canzano's voice greeting her with:

"Well, here's your first sight of the New World!"

In his shore-going clothes of black cloth, with his black tie and his very black hair, he too seemed more foreign, more odd than he had ever seemed before. His hand seemed whiter and the lapis-

lazuli ring upon his little finger once more caught her eye as he pointed straight before him—she had come out upon the covered deck to stand beside him—and said:

“There it is!”

And she was aware, in the yellow tones of sea and sky, of something long, blue and tranquil—a smudge in shape like a gigantic whale. And it did affect her with a minute touch of hostility when he said:

“That is the Jersey coast!”—for all the world as if he too were not a European to know that Jersey is a European possession. It was so big, so intangible, that great smudge, that it seemed to her to savour almost of disloyalty to really appropriate that old, real name to something belonging to what after all was all new and not very seriously to be considered. The ship moved onwards with a more steadfast tranquillity, so that almost for the first time she seemed to realise the irrevocability of their journey. It *hadn't* seemed perfectly serious before.

“The New World!” he said again, “what a fine sound there is in those words! Aren't they full of promise and irresponsibility and romance? I always think, still, that it's the finest thing in the world coming in here.”

She felt almost injured as she said:

“But *you* aren't an American!” for it seemed to her as if they ought to have drawn closer together in a common bond of protest.

“Why,” he answered, “if I *were* an American I might not say it. The New World would probably be as dull to me as the Old.”

She looked at his foreign, olive face with a new interest.

"Is that the way to take it?" she asked.

"Oh, that's the way," he answered; "if you take it like that you'll find it's awfully good. It's not a medicine you're going to swallow: it's a purely irresponsible joke."

She began:

"But surely we *are* Europeans."

When he interrupted her quite earnestly:

"No, assuredly we *aren't*." And he put both his hands upon hers as it lay upon the dull red wood of the rail. "For Don's sake consider that we aren't anything that we started out with being. We've got to leave all our standards behind: we've got to leave our prejudices. Do, for Don's sake, make the effort."

"It needn't be an effort," she said, "if it's really the way to take it."

"It's the only way," he said. "For you won't find here anything that you've ever valued before. I don't find anything that I should think amusing on the other side. But *ciel!* I amuse myself. I forget that I am a Canzano: I am just a person at a picnic. And believe me, it's very funny."

She didn't remove her hands from his when she asked: "But surely it isn't fair to . . ." and she indicated with her chin the Jersey hills that they were leaving behind—"it isn't fair even to these people not to judge them by our standards."

He clasped her hands more tightly:

"Believe me," he said, "believe me, it wouldn't be fair to Don to do any such thing."

"You mean," she said, "that if I don't leave my prejudices behind me . . ."

He interrupted her with, "Don't call them prejudices: call them standards—the highest standards in the world. But all the same they don't apply here; they don't begin to apply. And if you can't leave them in abeyance you'll be miserable yourself all the time. And you'll draw a trail across Don's activities, and that will make him unhappy, and . . ."

She interrupted him in her turn with: "But wouldn't Don want me to judge . . ."

"Don might or Don mightn't," he was quick to catch her up. "Half he would or half he wouldn't. He'd want you to judge and to be tender. But that isn't possible here. I assure you it isn't. The moment that one begins to judge one condemns. But as long as one forces oneself to accept one has the best time in the world. . . ." He broke off and suddenly appealed to someone who was behind her back. "Isn't what I've been saying perfectly true?"

"I imagine: singularly just!" she heard her father's voice say.

Mr Greville was leaning against the doorway; his long coat flapped in the hot draught that came from the interior of the vessel; he was rubbing his eyes in preparation for putting on his glasses.

"You've got, my dear, to consider," he said, "that you're in the position of making a visit to your husband's people."

"As if I were visiting a coachman's lodge?" she asked a little rebelliously.

Mr Greville shrugged his shoulders.

"That's as you like to take it," he said, "but it would be more discreet to put social conventions out of your head."

"Oh, put all conventions out of your head!" Canzano urged her. "It's not a question of class and class. Believe me, it isn't. It's a question of another race; of a different planet: of a different species even. Don't judge: observe. Don't condemn: just have a good time."

She felt as if, in this discussion, she could trust even more to Canzano than to her father. For Mr Greville affected her as being too reasonable. He hadn't, at bottom, any respect for class. He wouldn't, she felt, have liked her to marry a shop-keeper or a clerk, because these professions were sedentary and mean-spirited upon the whole. He wouldn't have minded—theoretically at least—an efficient ploughman.

But Canzano was a mine of class-prejudices: he didn't, she had discovered, consider his inferiors as even human. He would be polite to them, but they were *canaglia*. So that if he, who in this matter came closer to her than even her father did—if he advised her that it was possible to abandon oneself and, over here, just have a good time, she could vaguely see the possibilities of a workable point of view.

"I'm not, in short," she said, "to consider . . . these people . . . as if they were Europeans—or even as grown-up people at all."

Canzano positively rubbed his hands.

"Consider them as children!" he said. "Excellent! Excellent! Then they'll hardly worry you at all."

He appealed suddenly to Mr Greville.

"You don't know," he said, "you can't—what an excellent fellow Don is. I love him quite unspeakably. And just as if he were a child too. I want *him* to have a good time if no one else has. And I want him to have it at the hands of us Europeans too."

Mr Greville looked away from him with his mouth open: he didn't, however, utter anything.

"You think I'm a rock on which he might possibly split?" Eleanor laughed.

"Oh, heavens!" Canzano answered, "I think you're the only island upon which he could ever really taste felicity."

"But you don't," Mr Greville brought out, "imagine that he's going to attain to felicity with his own countrymen or his own schemes."

Canzano shrugged his shoulders up to his ears.

"His poor old schemes!" he said.

"Why don't you say his poor old countrymen?" Mr Greville asked.

"Look here!" Canzano said, "we've got—we three—to work for his happiness. We've got to rescue him from his follies—not by telling him that they're follies, but by letting him prove to himself how futile they are. And," he bowed to Eleanor, "by proving to him how much more charming life elsewhere may be."

"You think, in fact," Eleanor said, "that if I try to cross him he'll feel homesick for his ideals for ever and ever."

Canzano embraced the sea, the sky, the sludge boats, and a lady in a bright green satin dress, with a circular shrug of his shoulders.

"Poor dear Don," he said, "will soon get tired of trying to put the sky where the sea is, and trying to make *cette dame* wear colours that won't set our teeth on edge. He'll have, eventually, the sense to see that his compatriots too are having in their own way the best kind of time and only want to be let alone."

Mr Greville interrupted him to say that though he perfectly agreed he'd like to suggest that they breakfasted in time for Eleanor to get up her strength for when she was asked what were her impressions of New York Bay. Noting pleasantly that her father must be in the best of spirits, for she couldn't believe that he was serious in saying that these people would really ask her what her impressions were, Eleanor turned in at the doorway, leaving behind her a glimpse of yellow sky, yellow sea, a yellow spit of sand and a house, resembling, with its yellow sides and red roof, a Shoreham bungalow. And at Canzano's saying that that was Sandy Hook, she couldn't help wondering if the United States State expressed its considerable majesty always in edifices so like the houses that the retired tradesmen ran up round her Canterbury. The spirit of hurry pervaded now every corner of the ship. It rendered their breakfast perfunctory, for the stewards fidgeted on

thin ankles around Mr Greville's standing figure: half of the tables had no cloths, and already the passengers were grouping themselves in the chairs in the middle of the saloon to await the Customs officers. There were bags in all the corridors, and even Don twice left the breakfast-table at the summons of the distracted maid. It was, however, Mr Greville who—to have the experience—was to make the declaration in the saloon, and it was upon Don's arm that, hurrying a little to see the entrance to the finest bay in the world—Don had told her that it really *was* fine—she stumbled slightly over the threshold of the promenade deck and was immediately rushed up to by a girl in blue with red hair—a girl who, like half the other passengers, appeared now for the first time to have emerged from some hidden place to ask breathlessly:

“Well, and what are your impressions?” and to dash away without waiting for an answer.

Immediately confronting them, above the slate-grey sails of an immense schooner, dominating Eleanor's slight bewilderment, greenish grey, and with a dull gilt crown of spikes, there rose a colossus in a bronze nightgown.

“So there it is!” Don said beside her.

But to her it didn't lend itself to any impression at all and she asked gaily—for after what Canzano had said she was determined to be gay:

“So there is what?”

“Liberty!” he answered.

Her gayness—though she apprehended that he was referring to what must be the statute—made her say:

"The liberty of an absolute stranger's asking me what my impressions are? I've never seen that girl before."

His face expressed a sudden concern.

"Oh, don't take it as an odious liberty," he said, "it isn't. You don't probably realise what it is to these people to be able to show someone what they really believe's fine . . ."

"Oh . . ." she was beginning.

"It is part of their lives," he continued nevertheless to plead with her. "It is the oldest and the finest thing they can remember. It's as old for them as Canterbury Cathedral, because it's been here all their conscious lives. And remember, too, that they've probably—all of them—been being 'shown' things innumerable for months past . . ."

"My dear old boy," she cut in on his pleadings, "I know it all. I don't in the least resent it. The only thing I resent is that I wasn't up here in time to see the statue from a distance. I was looking forward to catching it against the sky. And now . . ."

So quickly had they passed the columnar mass and the schooner that the vessel already looked small and dark-sailed against the mist and the morning sun, and the statue had taken a heavy form against the pale yellow sky. The shores of the bay spread out before them, low and greenish, without sparkle in the waters, where innumerable black posts stood up or slanted over and innumerable small steamers raised the foam at their bows. There was a great impression of pale largeness, of swift gliding, and of strangeness.

"I've never seen anything like it," she said. "I've never been so excited, and do believe me when I say I'm having a good time. And I'm going to have one. I'll try to get all sorts of impressions ready to tell all sorts of nice people. But there are so many, it's a little bewildering."

He pressed her arm with a great pleasure.

"Oh—well," he said, "I can't keep the boat still even for you to have time to see everything."

"I don't *want* the boat kept still," she said, beating one of her feet upon the boards, "it's simply thrilling."

A bewildering rush of subjects for information didn't exactly overwhelm her, but in her new attitude of mind she let them excite her tremendously. An odd little island, with a sandy shore and what was apparently a collection of railway stations and large villas out over the water to the left, gave her at once the odd satisfaction of really seeing American soil and the little feeling of grimness at learning that it was Ellis Island where all the dun crowd of emigrants forward and astern would be interned. It depressed her a little to have it forced upon her that here, on the hind side of the statue, the first thing that you ran against—after you had had yourself a liberty taken with you—was at least an impression of imprisonment for the offenceless. But she had immediately to face the problem of why all the women—and here was an extraordinary crowd of them bedizened and plumed, silhouetted against and obscuring the view on the forward rail, uttering an indescribable babel of cries, pulling each other by the

shoulders to attract attention to some new point of view—as to why the women looked all so extraordinarily different. On the voyage they had seemed simple rather to supererogation: simple at least to a point of quite good taste. Now they were cloaked, furred, in spite of the tepid mist, ribboned, bonneted, jewelled. It struck her as extraordinary that these people—who did in a way know how to dress when there was comparatively no one to see them—should have adopted war-paints so portentous in which to go before the public in the streets.

But Don's explanation that they hadn't done it because of a sudden madness of bad taste or out of a desire to label themselves as just landed from Yurup, but merely to avoid outrageous Customs' dues—Don's explanation was lost a little in her mind by the fact that by the time he had arrived at it he had also arrived at piloting her round the corner, through the excited crowd. It wasn't, however, too excited to yield her precedence so that she might gather the impressions they so much wanted her to be overwhelmed by—and she reached a position where she took in at once, as in a blaze, the fact that she was beside her father, in a little, as it were, cleared space, and being borne forward by the steamer into a great gulch filled with a vast cloud of vapours blowing from on high towards her left hand, paved with a flat floor of pale, cream-coloured water.

It took her a gasping moment to realise that the cliffs on the right were buildings, the black mudbanks on the left were really the arched glass roofs of stations

and steamer quays, and the shuttles, like beetles that glided in an extraordinary maze, with, as it were, odd elbows jerking out of their roofs and little gilt eagles stuck about over them, were steamboats of a sort. And in this confusion she was aware of a man, wonderfully florid, pink-cheeked, shaven and blue-eyed, who, as if he were the leader of the band of watchers around them, held her father by his black shoulder and pointed a red hand towards what seemed a thin filament high in the air, half invisible in the mist and rapidly being hidden behind the pigeon-holed white cliffs that she had again to make an effort to remember were buildings. The man was saying that that was the finest bridge in the world, and something in the minatory tones of his voice brought to Eleanor's lips the remark:

"Why, you said there was no coal smoke in New York!"

It wasn't indeed that she wanted to convict him of error—it was simply that in her excitement she wanted to say something to him, and all at the moment that came into her head was that on the night of the sunset he had made that statement. Immediately afterwards she recollected also that he was the Reverend Mr Campbell. . . . He turned upon her with a violence that for a minister seemed singular until she remembered that it might be part of a creed and said, with a loud, beautifully-trained and remarkably-overbearing voice:

"There — is — no — coal — smoke — in — New — York!"

Eleanor—since they were both of them gazing at

three black and gigantic pillars of smoke that issued from three black and gigantic chimneys in the wilderness of yellow mist and white vapour—Eleanor uttered an: “Oh, but—” But the clergyman’s hard eyes and a feeling that he would certainly knock her down if she persisted in disbelieving in his particular miracle made her rejoice a little when there came from behind her back the gentle voice of Mr Houston.

“You must remember, my dear, that Mr Campbell’s a Scotsman!”

“At anyrate,” Mr Campbell fulminated, “the State of New York has laws against coal smoke.”

But Eleanor had by now afforded herself the relief of turning her back to the clergyman.

“My dear,” Mr Houston addressed her directly again. He jerked back his tired, brown face with the white, fragile beard and showed his thin neck. “You’ll find it much the same all the world over. Good Americans don’t go to Europe because they like America. And Scotsmen who’d probably make very bad Scotsmen at home—why, they come to America and pretend to like it. Of course you’ve heard of the tail-less fox!”

Don gave him a look of the most intense gratitude and threw at Eleanor another of a sort of agonised pleading.

“Indeed,” he said, “it’s true. You wouldn’t find any real Americans so rude as that.”

“Dear thing,” she whispered, “it’s all right. I’m enjoying it all. I *believe* about the tail-less fox.”

It was at this moment that Mr Houston touched Don upon the shoulder, and jerking his beard back

with an odd gesture of implying that he desired a little secrecy, asked him in a whisper how they were going to get to their hotel. He hadn't heard Don or his uncle speak of their having anybody to meet them. And left to herself for the minute—the numerous persons who had asked her for her impressions having dwindled away—Eleanor had time to form a new impression of the fact that the entering of New York harbour—and she regretted it quite a little!—was over. The voyage was over: it was done with. For the great vessel had stopped. It moved no more its spars from building to building; it began to turn. She saw upon the one bank the name of a firm that supplied patterns to all creation—a name in letters as high as the column in Trafalgar Square—a name that seemed to give to the city on the further side an odd cachet of being connected—of having for its mission the supplying to civilisation of the little flimsy bits of paper she had often enough “cut out” by. And quite close at hand, in letters much smaller, but each still as large as a house, was the name she expected to hear. The Collar Kelleg Lines! There they were: a dozen openings like railway tunnels: grey wharves: grey piles: the home of this ship and of how many more? She had an odd little shiver. She hadn't ever thought that she would come to see *her* name—her name dominating the most important estuary in the world. It is true that the letters were merely in white upon a black board. But she saw all round each letter a bevy of electric lamps. By night then they would flare, she and Don, in the face of a whole civilisation!

And she wondered if this, too, were one of the things that Canzano would wish her to have a good time with. But she swallowed it with the reflection that this at least was the other side of the world. It was in a sense terrible—but it was in a sense as if she *had* attained to a sort of irresponsibility. She wouldn't, in the Park at home, like to ride on a horse painted blue with the name of her soap upon it. But she could just imagine herself doing it in the Park here—if there were a Park—for probably it was, as you might say, a custom, and *all* these people had their names stuck up somewhere to blaze through the astonished nights. In that way it mightn't be worse than putting on a hat manufactured in Fifth Avenue.

She had determined to bear it and grin—or rather to take it as one of the ingredients of the general grin with which, for Don's sake, she was to embrace all of life here—when Don came back to her. His face was an odd mixture of smile and concern—his lips being curved upwards, his eyes, as he came, searching her face.

“Would you believe?” he shouted, for a din was beginning to drown even the insistent, broad, melodious and continued hooting of steam-sirens that for the last hour had seemed to be the pervading note of the landscape, “that old man Marconi'd from mid-Atlantic for carriages to take us to our hotel! He was asking me just now if I thought three would be enough to take us all and the servants.”

“The old *dear*!” Eleanor shouted to him, and she heard him cry:

“That’s cheering!” And it was a little thing that puzzled her for the rest of her life—she never remembered to ask him—whether he meant that Mr Houston’s kind thought had cheered him or whether the sounds that now overwhelmed all others—the high, wailing, insistent and ferociously exciting tumult—were the product of welcoming lungs. She couldn’t ask him at the moment, it seemed to blind and to confuse her so, but he took her by the hand and led her round to the other side of the deck.

The ship was imprisoning itself, with an imperceptible gliding, against a shed that appeared to be a mile long—a shed whose sides, of what she could not help thinking were unnecessary ugly black planks, had in it long openings from which there appeared to spurt innumerable pocket-handkerchiefs. And she realised that the extraordinary high wail came from thousands and thousands of human beings behind the handkerchiefs. At that same moment she realised that the handkerchiefs themselves were liberally interscattered with tiny editions of that blue and pink and white flag which amidst the more assertive flags of the nations is as frailly pretty as is the American pretty woman amongst the beauties of the world.

She found herself thinking: “Fancy *our* people producing Union Jacks!” and “Fancy *our* people making such a noise at a landing!” dimly, amidst the turmoil, for each sound seemed to be having added to it the wailings of new contingents, waving from every cranny of the vessel itself new handkerchiefs or new flags.

“And, after all,” she was reasoning to herself, “why shouldn’t there be an excitement?” There were, when one came to remember it, three thousand people on board, and perhaps three had come to welcome each of them. It was only the high note of the sound itself—the whoop, the yell, the resonant quality like that of the wailing overtone of a bell—that remained surprising. You wouldn’t find anywhere in the real Eastern world a crowd capable of producing it. It was the real difference!

She began to think that the spirit of the place had infected her, for she had forgotten her aunt. But already it was too late to think. She was taken, at Don’s side, by the crowd in the tiny space. The vessel had touched the quay, and at the contact, as if the time for action having come the time for shouting had passed, there fell a dead silence—and in the silence the battle raged. A lady thrust a bundle of umbrella handles into her face at the moment that a man thrust a bag into her back, and half a dozen, rushing out of the door of the saloon, pushed Don over upon her so that she was crushed against the rail. It astonished her: but a minute later it excited her; she set her white teeth, used her elbows, and laughed at Don’s perturbed expression as she had often enough done at home when pushed into the pit at a theatre. And after all, if the bangs that she got were harder, wasn’t the spectacle she was going to see more exciting than anything she had ever experienced at home? And with a laughing nod at him, as he stood on the inclined gangway above her, holding his arms across from rail to rail and

supporting the crowd off her with his back, she ran down the planks as if she were shooting a chute at a suburban exhibition at home and uttered, as he was propelled down upon her by the crowd behind him:

“ Well, now, shall I fall down and kiss your native soil? ”

The native soil was of tarred planks: the building was apparently miles and miles long, roofed with a waving span of corrugated iron, decorated with the queerest advertisements she had ever seen. It was filled with a crowd of women in Paris frocks being shouldered by men in shirt sleeves—a bewildering crowd in the half light that, little by little, resolved itself into men in blue uniforms with bits of chalk and labels. They wandered about unconcernedly with their hands behind their backs amidst the largest travelling trunks in the world from which there foamed over, as if from tankards of stout, lace undergarments that delighted her eyes. And whilst Don still distractedly pulled her by the arm in the search for what he called “ their letter,” she had time to get the distinct impression that they were in France. For in and out among the distracted women, the men in shirt sleeves, the men in uniforms and the overflowing trunks there wandered, melancholy, sad-faced, dark-eyed and aloof, a slow army of foreigners in blue blouses wheeling large trunks upon porters’ barrows.

She made out upon the wall, high up between the vast picture of a bull and the vaster picture of a green tin labelled “ Baked beans,” a quite tiny letter: “ G.” And to this she called Don’s attention.

“ Our boxes will be under that,” he said, and he

added, whilst behind him a melancholy man in blue uttered a yelp that she took to be Italian: "It's wearily badly managed."

"Oh, it's awful fun!" she reassured him, and she had a view of the Reverend Mr Campbell pushing swiftly past them, very heated and very red, exclaiming to an unconcerned old gentleman, apparently a general, in a blue uniform and a straw hat, that something was a worse scandal than in Italy. And whilst they made their way through the piles of boxes towards the G. that was their sheet-anchor, she had, a little regretfully, a vision of the familiar faces of many fellow-passengers whirling past her. It was the ship's company dissolving, disappearing, part of a past phase.

But even when, in the comparatively calm back-water of their own extraordinarily huge pile of boxes, she was able to sit down in a deck-chair that Mr Houston was waiting to offer her, she had still before her the task of reassuring Don.

"It's extraordinary," he said, "that we can't manage even a Customs examination better than this!"

"But, dear boy," she said, "it's such a vast crowd."

"Oh, go up the Thames," he said wearily, "there's a crowd there every day bigger than they get here in a year and they do it all in ten minutes, without a shove in any single passenger's back." She knew very well that he was apologising to her, that he was trying to deprecate to her the sufferings that she was undergoing, and she tried very hard to think of some words of real genius by which she could make him

feel certain that she was really going to have a good time: but she had not got a word out before a man in a blue flannel shirt with turn-down collar, buff trousers, a slouch hat and a drooping, blonde moustache, was saying to her in a sharp, clear, odd accent—she took him for a cowboy: “I’m telling Mr Houston here that you won’t want no more’n three cabs. I guess yours ain’t sich a plump lot if yeh’re a sample of the rest!” He had the breezy air of a man used to commanding vast bodies of things, and he didn’t seem to consider her as of more than passing importance.

Don said, and his voice rose a note in agony:

“Oh, for goodness sake don’t think we’re all like that!”

And she had her stroke of genius.

“I expect,” she said, “that he doesn’t know I’m a Greville!” And whilst his eyes devoured her face she put a finger on his sleeve and added: “Dear, I’m going to forget it myself.”

And the trouble she was at to persuade him, under the eyes and ears of many people, that she was prepared to take everything as it came—this trouble modified extraordinarily the vividness of her impressions. It took away indeed from the squalor of the singularly squalid approaches: it made her tolerate the odd procession of coaches, like that in a funeral procession at home, with which, when they were finally out of the uniformly brown, rigid and rather appalling quarters of docks and warehouses, they approached the fine untidy streets that led to their quite tremendous hotel. She was

indeed so impressed with the fact that Don was suffering mental pains that she couldn't do more than give half an eye to what passed their carriage windows. If she looked at and if she noticed what at home she would have called the lower classes—but what here she was sufficiently attuned not to be able to call anything at all—if she looked rather at the men driving enormous express waggons, throwing bricks from the housetops or lying on the doorsteps of dingy boarding-houses—if, in fact, she attended rather to the poor it was because she knew that it was the poor who were going to interest her lover. When she passed out of the crosstown street region of dingy, brown stone houses, where she supposed the poor to dwell, she leant back in the carriage. Don told her that they had struck the Avenue that was said to rival or surpass any Boulevard, Allée or Lane of any European city. But she thought she might lean back and rest her eyes, for except for the shape of the policemen's helmets she wasn't prepared to see any great differences. Her eyes were a little aching, they had seen so much of what she thought must be poverty, and so much of what, she was quite certain, was Latin blood. There had been paper all over the pavements, endless processions of little brasiers with tin furnaces in the charge of dusky men with vivid whites to their eyes. There had been innumerable children, bare-footed, with broken trousers girt up to their shoulders, red-headed, or with their heads inverted, hidden in tubs that stood upon the stones on the broken sidewalks, their bare, dirty little feet waving in the air; she had seen over the dimly

uninviting stores signs that—if they didn't repel her because she couldn't imagine herself purchasing anything there—filled her with pity for the poor people who did have to.

It tired her: so that when at last in the more imposing quarters she tried to lean back and rest it wasn't the least of her troubles to see on Don's face a look of intense concern.

He leaned forward to touch her knee and said:

"Now look, we're just turning into Fifth. There's Broadway: this is Madison Square." And his eyes said: "You've looked so hard at all our dirty places, now look at the best we've got to show."

And if her father hadn't been there, on the seat beside her, silent, but taking it all in with his black eyes she would have said:

"Dearest, I'm only interested in what interests you. And I *know* you don't care for these streets!" His eyes were saying (for she hadn't yet been able to make him understand): "I know you're more interested in what's fine in life."

It was at the corner where the 28th Street cars cross the Avenue that Mr Greville spoke his first words since they had crossed the ferry.

"You'll have an extraordinary difficulty in getting at any facts, Don," he said: "so far, every single thing that I have seen with my own eyes has flatly contradicted every single piece of information to the same effect that I've read or been told on board the ship!"

Don came out of his agonised perturbation about Eleanor to look at his father-in-law. Mr Greville said,

pointing a thin finger at the tram that was crossing their route:

“That’s the only tram I’ve seen so far and it’s drawn by horses. You will remember that the *Journal of Engineering* I showed you on board stated that the ugly and insanitary horse-drawn car—I remember the exact words—had been swept entirely from the streets of New York. Another print informed me that the whistles of the pea-nut barrows had been entirely swept out of existence by a law that came into force last March. The streets of the city were said, in consequence, to be absolutely the quietest in the world. I have counted seventy-two pea-nut barrows each with a quite loud whistle.”

II

THEIR earliest hours in New York were complicated by family troubles that, for the moment, drove out of Eleanor's head even her solicitude for Don's wretchedness. He was, undoubtedly, she considered, quite ill. It seemed as if his arriving on the field of battle caused him an amount of excitement that amounted to nervous prostration.

Don—positively *Don!*—made a wonderful worrying fuss with the clerks at the enormous mahogany counter, in the enormous marble and tiled hall. He had, for reasons that appealed to himself alone, made up his mind that his *fiancée* and her aunt and her father and the maid and the valet should occupy precisely the same suite of rooms with precisely the same suite of furniture—it had belonged to Marie Antoinette—that his father and mother had quarrelled in years before. And the trouble was that the rooms were still there and the furniture was still there, only the furniture—because it was, by that time, too dingy to suit the tastes of succeeding magnates and of at least one Royal Duke—the furniture had been moved several floors higher up. The clerks at the counter were rather impolite: the assistant sub-manager—a Frenchman—was almost too polite: the sub-manager, an Englishman, was too blandly

explanatory. He explained, that is to say, that, at that hour of the day they simply couldn't, in that country, expect workmen to move the furniture down. And he pointed out that the change would cost a quite unreasonable amount of money, and that even if they brought the Marie Antoinette chairs down from the upper floors, they would, the chairs, be quite violently out of keeping with the present fixed ornaments of the lower rooms, which, to give a feeling of homeliness to a certain king, had been decorated exactly in the style of the palace at L——n. The rooms presented a singularly dazzling spectacle of plate-glass mirrors, real gold leaf and elephant tusks.

And Eleanor had the spectacle—a little saddening and bewildering—of poor Don battling quite furiously with a number of hard-eyed gentlemen in frock coats and with singularly shining heads of hair. And she had the feeling, too, that they simply didn't care much whether he were pleased or no. And Augustus, with a sardonic air, was carefully avoiding her eye in his triumph over poor Don's exhibition of emotion. She fired up in Don's defence to the extent of assuring herself that she didn't care if they were, all the body of them, blocking up the tremendous hall, with its marble, its mahogany, its ducal chairs, its lounges, its guests in irreproachable costumes or its guests in cowboy hats, red ties, frock coats and an air of having revolvers somewhere upon their terrific hips. Waiting for Don to get something settled she took in these details little by little and assured herself that if they *were* attracting

attention it didn't matter because they were where they were. But, upon the whole, she was glad when her aunt discovered a faintness. It meant that the five of them—for Canzano was awaiting an opportunity to settle some details before leaving for Boston—the five of them, leaving Don to his battles, could go to lunch in a quite small octagonal lunch room that didn't positively hold more than twenty-five tables for four. It was indeed her father who made this statistical discovery, just as it was he who, before they had been there two minutes, inquired of Canzano if it was characteristic of the best American hotels to have walls like *that* ! And he indicated the yellowish spaces that, beneath arches of green marble, formed a background for all sorts of lunchers' heads and hats.

It comforted her to have Canzano to direct, in their native Italian, the half dozen waiters who had borne down upon them, and—because she was so anxious to be pleased—it comforted her, too, to be able to feel that this light, gay, well-glazed and domed room was quite as good as anything, anywhere else, could be.

"Like what?" Canzano asked, and he glanced over his shoulder at the notable walls.

"What I mean," Mr Greville answered, "is that every other piece of wall space here appears to be of marble. These are only painted brick!"

Canzano said, with a sort of gay contempt for his environment: "Oh, my dear sir! This is an extraordinarily old-fashioned place. I should have taken you somewhere quite different."

"But the walls?" Mr Greville pinned him to his topic.

"What about the walls?" and Canzano wiped his fork with a napkin.

"Are they symptomatic of a want of finish? Or were they once a fashion?"

"Oh, heaven in its wisdom knows," Canzano answered. "They may have been the fashion. But," he added brightly, "if you go about this country looking for evidences of want of attention to finish you'll find plenty." And he looked significantly at Eleanor: "You'll find plenty of everything you look for here."

They did indeed find plenty of everything when, very soon afterwards, they got to the rooms that Don had at last sanctioned. He came in, finally, noticeably calmed and even smiling.

He had satisfied himself after investigation that the suite of rooms that contained Marie Antoinette's furniture so exactly reproduced those that his father had occupied that except that you had to stay about ten seconds longer in the elevator you couldn't well tell the difference. And he accepted quite gaily Canzano's criticism upon his choice of an hotel.

"Well," he said, "if this hotel's old-fashioned you can at least get something near what you want by making a fuss here. Anywhere else in America they put you into the elevator and throw you out on a floor that you haven't a voice in choosing. And there you've got to stick."

He was eating chicken with a cheerful voracity. And Eleanor couldn't make up her mind whether he'd taken himself in hand very vigorously after an attack of nerves or whether irritation was a necessary concomitant of taking rooms in an hotel over here, a thing that you had to go through and that didn't leave traces. But that speculation too had to give way to other troubles. They hadn't, it appeared immediately, come to New York merely to have a good time . . .

Their great drawing-room, which had six windows in the side street and four looking into Fifth Avenue, had too, along all the wall spaces, priceless, dim tapestry designed by Watteau, and all the chairs and tables had graciously bowed legs and delicately painted tops and lyre-shaped backs of embroidered work faint and paled by age. All these things had known in former days the presence of a dead Queen of France, and in a quite beautifully-conceived contrast there was, in a little Buhl cabinet, a flap that let down and disclosed the black and nickel fittings of a telephone. And to it Canzano attached himself before even their coffee had reached them up there. The problem was to find Mackinnon. And in this search Canzano opened a long battle by saying in at the table: "Get me Boston!" His ear glued at the little cup of nickel, his face went through an attentive pantomime whilst at intervals his mouth uttered: "Boston . . . Boston, Massachusetts. . . . I can't hear . . . Give me a better connection . . . Yes . . . I want Boston . . . Boston, Massachusetts. . . . No . . . Yes

. . . I want Boston . . . Boston, Massachusetts.” And holding a finger to his disengaged ear he went on uttering these monotonous words with an engrossed expression. Their own man brought them in their coffee with a varied and rather bewildered expression. Mr Greville attentively surveyed Canzano at the telephone, and Eleanor knew that he was noting down facts as to the telephone system of the United States. Don was explaining to Mrs Greville, who, with her bonnet-strings untied, was sipping her coffee vindictively from a gilt cup without a handle, why he had been so careful about the rooms. It was, he said, absolutely imperative that if you wanted in America anything at all out of the ordinary to know what you wanted and to stick out till you got it. As a general rule, he explained, he’d be content himself with everything quite ordinary. But for her and Eleanor he’d wanted to be quite certain of something comfortable and in good taste. And positively the only things he’d been certain of in New York—where everything changes so rapidly—were that suite of rooms and that furniture. So he’d made up his mind to have them. He’d known that that nook was bearable, and he’d been determined to place them just there . . .

Augustus, who had been looking out of the window at the tops of the carriages in —th Street, suddenly turned and came to where Eleanor was sitting by the coffee equipage on a blue and gold and white table. He stood holding his cup and surveying her sardonically.

"I'm to go to Boston," he said at last.

Eleanor made a swift review of the position. It meant that poor Augustus would be separated not only from her but from his mother.

"How splendid!" she blurted out.

He scowled and uttered:

"Yes;" and then, glancing at Canzano at the telephone: "That fellow's mother is the chief executrix of the will! He's going to talk to her now." He shrugged his shoulders and his eyes had in them so much of gloomy malice that she felt irresistibly called to ask what he meant.

"Only," he answered gleefully, "I fancy there won't be much left for you and Don when they've finished."

It was at this point that Mrs Greville, with an extraordinary rustling of her black silk petticoat, rose and said that she must go to superintend the unpacking.

"I suppose," she added, "that Kirsens will have to do for me. I suppose a maid is quite good enough to help *me*!" Don hastened to assure her that there was in the hotel a whole staff of professional unpackers, but with her head rigidly fixed away from them she passed through the doors with their gracious scrolled panel work and their paintings by Fragonard of *décolletée* shepherdesses with beribboned necks.

She put, indeed, her head once more out between the panels to utter:

"Augustus, I want you!"

But Augustus remained standing by Eleanor,

his hands deep in his trousers pockets, his lips lifted to show his teeth in a snarl.

"Funny, isn't it?" he asked. And, at her asking what was funny, he brought out in a whisper: "That I'd like to see him jolly well ruined—and yet I'm sent to defend his interests!" Don, indeed, approached them nearly on his way over to Canzano at the telephone: but under cover of the Italian's patient but persistent calls, he had by this time "got on to" Boston and was asking by turns for the Information Bureau, so that he might discover his mother's number and for a better connection, Augustus was able to raise his voice and bring out with an effective hiss: "What you might call, 'Twixt hate and duty!'"

"Oh, well," Eleanor laughed at him, "you've got to remember that *my* interests are concerned as well."

She moved across the large room, with its old, bluish mirrors, its dusty, charming and precious clock upon the mantel, and she took her father by the elbow where he stood with his hand on the gilt, scrolled back of a chair with a faded tapestry seat. She moved him right across from the telephone, which was near the last window giving on to —th Street, and sat herself down on the panelled seat of a window that overlooked the Indian knickknack shops on Fifth Avenue. The October afternoon sun was shooting right down the side streets so that, at the parts of the Avenue between the blocks, the few carriages, the many hansoms, and the occasional motor vans were spangled with dusty

light. There were visible upon the broad side-walk just three well-dressed men and four ladies, but, just opposite, an immense building was being dustily pulled to pieces, and a great crowd of Italian workmen, in blue blouses and with battered straw hats, was surging out, and welling on to the carriage way, like a congregation leaving a church. She was far enough away, with her father, from the others to talk discreetly to him if he bent his ear, and pulling the elbow of his coat she lifted her head to his with a query: Was it true that Augustus was going to Boston to see the will? Mr Greville said that it was, apparently, perfectly true. Canzano had found from letters forwarded to him on the steamer that Mr Kelleg's will was definitely in the hands of Mrs Kelleg—the Countess Canzano.

Eleanor whispered again:

"Augustus says that he suspects the Canzanos of desiring to swindle Don. Do you think it's in the least true?"

Mr Greville, with his head a little inclined, looked at the floor and said:

"It's utterly untrue, and Augustus doesn't think anything of the sort."

"I didn't think he *did*," Eleanor answered, "but if he's capable of talking like that, do you think he's capable of doing what Don wants done?"

Mr Greville still retained his head's inclination and still looked at the floor.

"Augustus," he said, "only talks in that silly way in order to give the effect of being cynical. He only succeeds, to my mind, in appearing idiotic.

But he's perfectly capable of transacting business efficiently."

Eleanor said: "Ah!"

She leaned back a little, with the back of her head against the window panes, and far down the Avenue, which in its very high, straight length seemed to be washed in with clear, purple, beautiful shadows, she saw faintly what appeared to be a tall column of virgin whiteness. Its colour touched her with a certain excitement of pleasure, but she couldn't, owing to the fact that the window was at right angles, do more than just get occasional glimpses as she moved her head, and at moments she couldn't get any sight of it at all.

"So that," she said, "you consider it's a really efficient arrangement."

Mr Greville looked at her:

"If you're thinking of influencing your *fiancé* . . ." he began.

She said:

"Oh, goodness, I'm only too anxious to be able to leave him alone." But she added immediately afterwards: "I mean that I want to be able to help him as much as I can, and yet to be certain that he's not making mistakes."

Her father opened his mouth, closed it, opened it again and finally brought out:

"To my mind he's making a mistake all through . . ."

She interjected quickly:

"Oh, yes, I know all that, dear. But supposing he wanted the moon I'd try to help him to get it if

I were certain that he was going the right way to work. Don't you see, dear, that my trouble is he doesn't ever seem able to want anything, much? "

Mr Greville raised his head at that and allowed himself to speak as loudly as usual, as if he didn't care who heard him:

"Don doesn't want his father's business associates to know that he's here at all. He's taken it for granted that he must regard them as hostile. I don't want to comment on that—but—he regards them as hostile!—Then: if he wants to discover how the ground lies without either communicating with them or letting them know of his presence, he must, obviously, employ an agent to make for him as clear a statement of his case as he can."

"And you think he couldn't do better than Augustus? " she asked.

Mr Greville hesitated before committing himself.

"I think," he said, "that Augustus will be at least ten times as efficient as Don could possibly be himself, if only because Don is the soul of honour and Augustus . . ."

"Isn't? " Eleanor queried.

"Augustus"—her father made her an inclination that half suggested a bow—"Augustus, in the course of his profession, has come in contact with a great many commercial people."

Eleanor said: "Oh, dear! " But since, at this point, she had satisfied herself that her father was satisfied she did what she had been wanting to do for some minutes—she looked at Don, who was waiting for that signal from her to let himself approach them.

Canzano had laid down the little bâton of the telephone. He had "got on to" his mother's house and had now only to wait until his mother should return from her drive in Boston and should come and speak with him. And Don, as Eleanor very well knew, deemed the moment opportune to take them all into his confidence.

"Now," he said gaily, "we can go into a committee of the whole house." He liked, indeed, very much to talk if he couldn't bear to have to come to a decision, and whilst Canzano, fidgetingly, kept putting the ear-piece of the telephone to his ear and idly and tremulously getting up and sitting down again at the inlaid cabinet, Don set before them his facts, walking up and down and rubbing his hands.

The plot of his father's associates—as he gathered from about twenty newspapers that had been brought on to the ship at Sandy Hook—had reached a point so far successful that at least three of the New York journals were clamouring for his—Don's—impeachment.

All the papers would all have wanted it, Don said, if the rest of them hadn't been so lost in admiration for the cleverness of an office-boy called Sherman, who, by inspiration, "operating" exactly along the lines of the Kelleg group, had turned his weekly salary of eleven into a fortune of 72,000 dollars. This, Don said, had so impressed with a sense of admiration a great portion of the Press of New York that they hadn't much space left for reprehending the Kelleg associates.

"And of course," he said, "they couldn't, very

logically . . .” And then, glancing at Canzano’s smiling, sardonic face, a sudden inspiration seemed to strike him, so that he hit his forehead with his right palm.

“By heaven!” he ejaculated, “it *hadn’t* struck me. It *hadn’t*!”

And to Mr Greville’s “What?” he answered:

“Don’t you see? The Press is *in* with my associates. Obviously! Don’t you see? If they can make a gigantic figure of an office-boy making a fortune of 71,888 dollars—if they can make that boy loom immensely large in the public eye—of course they’ll make the public forget the rigging of the market. Why, they’ll make the very rigging of the market appear a meritorious proceeding. The office-boy’s fortune wouldn’t have been possible without it. And consequently every person in the country who wants to make a fortune quickly will look upon them—my associates—as positively public benefactors.”

Canzano laughed outright.

“You’re what,” he exclaimed, “they call a chip of the old block after all. That’s exactly your father’s invention. Every time he operated something very atrocious he always had someone—generally a widow or an orphan—whom he guided into making a little pile out of his operation.”

Don said: “It’s appalling!” and Canzano laughed. Mr Greville asked the young Italian, with his expressionless voice:

“But the Press? Why does it support the manœuvre?”

It was Augustus’s turn to contribute his quota.

"Oh," he said harshly, "even in London Mr Kelleg had what he called his Information Department. I know a chap who keeps a motor out of what he gets for inserting Kelleg paragraphs in quite good papers. It's done more artistically in London, but, bless you, the effect's the same."

And Canzano added:

"Mr Kelleg would have—papers . . ."

Don groaned:

"Oh, yes: pile it up!" But Eleanor stepped in to his support.

"After all," she said, "there are papers that clamour for your blood. They aren't *all* bribed."

Don, however, was not to be comforted.

"How do I know," he asked, "that *that*, too, is not part of the put-up job? Why, they may be set to do it in order that when the papers like to prove that I'm thoroughly virtuous there may be a revulsion in my favour. Don't you see what a coup that would be?"

It was, however, Mr Greville who said at this:

"Don't exaggerate too much. Your father must have had *some* enemies—and there must be about as many honest men here as on the London Press."

Don fronted him with a sort of brilliant dejection.

"Oh," he brought out, "I only want to say that over here you simply don't know who's who, or what's what, or who means anything."

"That," Mr Greville said, "is not a characteristic of America alone. It's part of the Spirit of the Age. It's everywhere. Even in our town in England we've got a brewer who secretly advocates temperance in

the local paper, to sell his mineral waters. If you ever want to get at anything you must not exaggerate—and you *must* distinguish. I agree that nowadays anything may belong to anybody. But that's not peculiar to this country." And having delivered himself of that speech, he looked round upon the delicate-framed tapestries of shepherds on the walls, as if in them at least he was assured of seeing something that was characteristic of an age, a time and a place.

Don passed his hands across his eyes.

"There's such a frightful lot to say and to do," he said, "that it's utterly impossible to know where to begin." He looked at Eleanor as if for inspiration, uttering: "Where was I?" And then he digressed again so as to attack Mr Greville with a final thrust.

"If never knowing who's in the pay of whom is a characteristic of the whole age, you've got to admit that they've brought that to a pitch of perfection here. Why"—and he pointed to the grey-and-golden chandelier—"if you protest against the gas here and have it cut off, the electric light is supplied by the gas trust, and if you don't like that the candles and the paraffin for the lamps is supplied by the same people. There's no end to it. . . . Why, I can't be certain that I don't own them too, myself."

"The point is, dear"—Eleanor's calm voice came forth as he paused for breath—"what's Carlo to telephone his mother? and is Augustus to go to Boston . . .?"

Don was repeating: "There's so much—so much . . ." when from the cabinet there came a long, impatient, and as if clamorous, crepitation of

the little bell, and Canzano, with a sort of hungry and radiant impatience, seemed almost to stab his ear with the little black and nickel bâton.

"Mother," he said, and then eagerly: "Yes, yes. . . . And your dear health. . . . Oh, alas! . . . You should take your drops more regularly. . . . Dear, dear, dear me. . . ." And suddenly he dropped into an Italian of little endearments and quivers that they tried hard not to listen to. Even he kissed the mouthpiece. And as if the voice of Canzano, the long dialogue of which they heard only the one half, steadied his nerves, Don managed to give to Eleanor the information that she wanted. So that when at last Canzano, after saying to them: "What a thrice-blessed invention the telephone is for those who live!" added the information: "Mr Mackinnon *is* in Boston!" Eleanor was fairly certain of who Mr Mackinnon was.

He was, in fact, the gentleman who had sent the cable that she had read in the dining-room at Canterbury—he was the manager of all Mr Collar Kelleg's enterprises; he had called, as far as Don knew at that moment—and Canzano immediately confirmed it from the telephone—a meeting of all the principal associates of the Kelleg combines at Boston on the following day. At this meeting the will, which was in possession of the Countess Kelleg, was to be read. There couldn't, in consequence, be anything more appropriate than that Don, through his attorney, should be represented at Boston on the morrow. And Eleanor couldn't more heartfully acquiesce in anything than in the arrangements that she presently

heard Canzano making with his mother for the hospitable reception of the man whom—however much she could take care of herself—she would be heartily glad to be rid of so advantageously. Augustus could get to work: Augustus could really earn the money that he was going to receive from Don: Augustus would go, she hoped, gradually out of her life. And, poor fellow, he would be freed from his mother.

III

THIS singularly happy consummation, if it brought a considerable peace of mind to Eleanor, caused at least a fit of sufficiently troublesome jibbing from one other member of the team that she had somehow got the impression she was driving. For Mrs Greville, by one of her tremendous reactions, having decided that she would let her own boxes be unpacked by the maid, had decided that she herself would unpack Eleanor's!

So that, into the end of the discussion in the large room with the delicate, dusty furniture, she came herself to ask Eleanor whether she wanted her cabin trunk unpacked first. It affected her herself with a sense of a finely dramatic irony. Here was the old generation accepting with a splendid humility the changed times! Nieces no longer waited on their aunts: then the aunts must wait on the nieces. And with her long and bony fingers, on which hung Eleanor's key-chain, with her high nose, hollowed temples and handsome eyes, she thought that, in the high doorway, she must seem like a presentment of Conscience to the erring girl.

She was received with the news that Augustus was going to Boston. It did not entirely root her to the spot, but it was quite a time before she was back through the folding-doors, and quite another little

time before her head again came back between the panels to say:

"Charles! Eleanor!—I wish to speak with you."

The point in the ensuing scene that most touched Eleanor was the extraordinary vulgarity of appearance that her own clothes, her own trunks and her own cosmetics had amongst the trappings of the former Queen of France's bedroom. For her aunt had actually commenced to unpack three of Eleanor's trunks before she had decided that the effect of humility of asking the girl which trunk she would have unpacked first would be strikingly greater than merely having all the "things" already stowed away for her when she had finished flirting with Augustus. So that on the high State bed, on the blue-and-silver toilet-table, over the mirror and on the negro's statuette in the corner Eleanor's skirts, her underskirts, her blouses were already hanging. There was even a pair of shoes upon the green marble mantelpiece.

Mrs Greville began her campaign with saying to her brother-in-law:

"I suppose then that Kirsens goes with me. And Eleanor too, I presume. She can hardly remain here with you two men alone."

And upon Mr Greville's politely but quite vacantly asking her what she meant—he was engaged in his own mind with the statistics of native-born Americans in the population of the city in which they were—she uttered equally unemotionally:

"Of course I go to Boston with my son!"

"Then, of course," Mr Greville answered her, "the party breaks up. Eleanor, I think, will need her maid herself. Eleanor will certainly remain in New York with me."

"I can't," Mrs Greville said, "allow my son to go about a strange continent alone."

"And I," Mr Greville answered, "can't allow my daughter to travel about a strange continent with a young man who pays her unwelcome attentions."

Mr Greville kept his eyes upon the window: his right ear was towards his sister-in-law.

"Then . . ." Mrs Greville began. But she dropped into the ferocious but irrelevant remark that she had been a good mother if Augustus had never been a good son. She had never allowed him to be away from her since he had been a baby.

"And surely," she said, "you can't approve of my letting him go to such a household—for the first time!"

Mr Greville had a positive gleam of humour.

"It's about time," he said, "that he began to sow his wild oats—if he can manage to sow them in a household to which I intend eventually to let my daughter belong."

"I understand," Mrs Greville began, "from what several ladies told me on board the boat, that this Countess Kelleg . . ." She paused, however, and looked first at Mr Greville and then at Eleanor. Eventually she concluded her sentence: "Whatever may be sanctioned here I shall certainly take Augustus to an hotel . . ."

Mr Greville avoided the subject with:

"If you intend to go perhaps you'd like to have the Kelleg Pullman. I understand that the Countess sent it down from Boston to meet her son. But Canzano has decided to leave it here at Don's disposal."

There seemed to be so absolutely no loophole for a further incision of Mrs Greville's tongue that she hadn't anything left to say but that she would go to attend to her re-packing.

"I presume," she said, "that Kirsén may help me."

Mr Greville answered:

"If Eleanor does not need her!"

Mrs Greville made a silent exit, whilst Mr Greville was saying expressionlessly to his daughter that he was so extremely angry that he was afraid in his haste he might have done something she disapproved of.

She reflected for a minute.

"No," she said, "you're a perfect parent."

She sank down on a chair rather helplessly and gazed at her various garments hanging in unlikely places.

"Why!" she said, "she's *torn* my evening skirt!" It hung, black and lustrous, from the candelabra that the little black marble negro in the corner held wearily towards the ceiling. "I wished at first that you'd let her take Kirsén. I don't now!"

Mr Greville said:

"It was precisely because I observed the disposition she'd made of your belongings that I so decided."

Eleanor let her arms drop at her sides.

"Upon my word," she said, "you are a most extraordinary old party! You frighten me out of my life."

"Well, my dear," he said mildly, "do you think I should have come upon this voyage if I hadn't thought I was able to see things?"

She was silent for a minute, then she uttered:

"And, dear, you *do* approve of what I've done?"

He answered her with:

"I think it's an excellent attempt if . . ." and he added after a pause: "if you're strong enough to carry it out. *I* shouldn't be."

"But I'm so *awfully* fond of him," she pleaded with him.

Mr Greville made towards the door, but with the long gilt and chased handle in his hand he paused and looked back over his shoulder.

"I don't know if you understand," he said, "what your actual problem is."

Eleanor simply waited for him to speak and he turned round.

"You've got," he continued, "to reconcile Don to his own country. That's what it amounts to." And after another moment he added: "The man's a poet: that's what the trouble is."

Eleanor said:

"Oh, dear, it seems rather desperate if you put it like that." And answering in turn the black glare of his dark eyes: "Is there anything here that you could reconcile a poet to?"

He came right back to her and took one of her hands between his.

"My dear," he brought out with a great deal of tenderness, "it all depends if he's a great *enough* poet!"

He searched her face with his black eyes: they gave to her the idea of something pathetic in his hard glance, for she knew that when he looked at her like that he was really trying to see her. At other times he was too blind really to know her expression.

"You understand, Ellie," he said, "that to see the trend of a time and a nation like this you have to be a great enough man to appreciate what you can't like. I don't think Don's up to that."

"But I am!" Eleanor pleaded with him.

Mr Greville reflected for a moment, then he said:

"Women are quite different in these things. They form theories of repulsion: but when they come up against hard facts they've the power to accept them. Most men haven't that faculty—and that's why men bear things so much worse than women." He went on to say—and it was a long and sustained speech for him—that why he himself was practically a recluse, why he hadn't ever taken to even a life so active as that of a civil servant at home, was only partly selfishness. He was selfish enough to be most interested in his own ease. But also he knew that he wasn't strong enough to keep his head in the face of a modern life that he detested. "I should," he said, "have committed myself to some foolish, because they'd be impractically retrograde, speeches

or politics." There wasn't, in fact, in active England or elsewhere any room for what *he* called a decent man; the place of such men was gone from the world. What decent men there were in public life to-day did more harm than good, and they soiled themselves by mixing in pettinesses.

"*And*," he added, "that's what will be the trouble with Don. He's too decent—in an idealist, impracticable way—to handle the problems here. He won't even begin to understand them." And Mr Greville said that, for the convenience of speaking, he'd say that Don was a nineteenth-century European Altruist: whereas the United States, whatever else it might be, was not, and was not ever going to be, nineteenth-century, or European, or Altruist.

He silenced the objection that she hadn't had time to bring to her lips with:

"Oh, I don't say it's altogether beastly, or even beastly at all. If it were, I don't think *you'd* be able to appreciate it, however determined you might be to make allowance."

"Oh, thank you!" she interjected gratefully. "Because I *do* like it here!"

"But," he said, "you must remember that your problem is to make Don like it."

"I think I *can*," she brought out, though he shook his head.

"The point is," he said, "whether it's really any use. I would not mind wagering that within ten days he'll be so dispirited that he'll want to be going back to England."

"If he does . . ." Eleanor began impulsively. But, although he left her plenty of time, she never finished her sentence.

"Ah!" he uttered, and his voice had even a certain sadness, "that's just what you've got to reflect upon. How will you feel if he does?"

She answered after quite a long time:

"I don't know."

"My dear"—he suddenly broke new ground—"I'd advise you to stay in your room until after your aunt and Augustus have started. They will have to in an hour."

She looked at him eagerly enough and uttered:

"Oh, do you think I can? I was just going to ask you."

He went to the door and once more returned.

"You won't feel lonely," he asked solicitously, "if I go out with Don till dinner? It appears that he's discovered his barber!"

She thought that she would feel so little lonely with all her things to arrange that she kept her thoughts on the other problem.

"I don't *want* to hurt their feelings. But they're both of them so terrible."

"My dear," Mr Greville said, "I don't think"—and there was a quite extraordinarily vindictive note in his voice—"I don't think that any punishment is sufficiently great for your aunt's proposing to take you to Boston with Augustus."

"Oh," Eleanor said, "that was only an insult, you know. She'd have gone mad if I'd come: but she

wanted to emphasise the fact that if I stayed it would be improper to be with two men alone . . .”

Mr Greville found Don telling Mrs Greville—who had her bonnet on already—that one of the chief defects of the United States, and one of the first things that would have to be remedied, was the gradual disappearance of family life. Even among the working classes, Don said, the chief problem of the head of the house was to conceal his income from his wife. If he got a rise in his wage he tried to conceal it. And the chief endeavours of the woman were directed to getting cents and dollars out of her husband. It was a sort of death-grapple between the sexes all up the social scale. There didn’t, he assured her, even begin to exist in America the fine solidarity of feeling that there was in every English family. A country whose family ties were founded upon money could not expect to be far upon the road to civilisation . . .

Mrs Greville was so worried to take Don into a corner and ask him for a further draft to cable to her brokers—Kelleg shares were still rising, and it was astonishing how Mrs Greville had mastered the details of conducting her gamble across the Atlantic wastes—that she couldn’t do more than utter:

“Oh, it *is* terrible. But I can’t believe it.”

“It’s true,” Don said; “you won’t find here what you find all over England—the fine, unruffled, calm, family spirit. And that . . .”

The entrance simultaneously from three separate doors of Mr Greville, of Canzano and of Augustus—staggering a little under an enormous rug that his

mother had told him to carry for her, because although the heat was actually tropical, in October, sometimes the nights, she understood, had touches of frost—these three entrances moved her to drag Don into a corner and proffer her request for a loan sufficient to help her to make a really large fortune.

IV

THE parting, without doubt, was hardest upon Augustus. He had to carry along with him not only a heavy assortment of his mother's "things," but a heart that was full of an extraordinary bitterness. He hadn't, in fact, the least doubt that his cousin, by not treating him worse had treated him extraordinarily badly. He couldn't make up his mind to acknowledge that she hadn't *some* feeling for him: he wasn't going to acknowledge that she hadn't flirted with him. She *had*, he maintained. She had, simply because she hadn't turned him out, neck and crop, from her lover's employment.

And then. . . . She didn't even come to say good-bye to him. He lingered in the large, bluish, dirty, empty drawing-room for so long after the others had gone down in the elevator that at last a bell-boy came to summon him—a bell-boy in a bluish uniform, who told him that it was a hot day and didn't offer to carry the rug, the jewel-case, the dressing-bag or the half-dozen newspapers that his mother had decided to take with them because they were so characteristic. He staggered under the weight of these things—and under the weight of his passion. He couldn't even clench his fist at Eleanor's door with its panelling of shepherds, and he couldn't believe, all the way down in the elevator, in the crowds in the

immense, quadrangular, marble and mahogany hall that they called an office—he couldn't believe that she wouldn't come to say good-bye; he couldn't believe it in the New York streets, he couldn't believe it in the ferry that took them, fixed in between its repulsive boards, in their carriage, across the water. It all appeared unrealisably unreal—so unreal that he half believed that Mr Greville, who sat silently beside him in the roomy carriage, might have some word of comfort and encouragement from Eleanor to deliver to him.

There wasn't, in the enormous, vaulted, grim *dépôt*, a porter to carry the dressing-case, the jewel-case, the rug or the half-dozen papers that, in his misery, he was continually dropping from under his arm. But even that seemed hardly real—even the extraordinary appointments of the Kelleg private car—the English footman, the Italian maid, the tape machine or the black porter; the velvet and silver, the lace curtains over the leaded windows; the Chippendale chairs and the saddlebag lounges, the French paintings on the ceiling, or the way in which everybody talked in the dim light—it all seemed unreal to him. There were undoubtedly voices: he *was* in a long railway car. But a place where she wasn't, wasn't thinkable—and she wasn't there! He had thrown down the things that troubled him, and he stood on the step of the car scanning the faces that passed. He couldn't believe that she wouldn't be *somewhere*, looking over some shoulder, to get a last glimpse of him. She *must* be somewhere; near a French-looking woman with a high figure; near an obviously German man with a blue

hat, or amongst the long drove of Italian immigrants that, impeded with bags and broken parcels, with necks craning, and anxious or confident eyes, streamed slowly down the platform.

The train moved imperceptibly whilst he still stood upon the step; Don waved his hand; Mr Greville, in his long frock coat and with his high-crowned, soft felt hat, glared after them; the Italian immigrants stared dully at the roof and glided backwards. His mother was asking for her lavender salts; the English footman bent over her, silent and attentive; the bell on the locomotive tolled out. They were moving along with a wonderful smoothness: they were out of the station shed and its dim light. It all seemed extraordinarily unfinished . . .

“And now!” Don said. . . . He grasped Mr Greville’s black elbow upon the platform and turned from watching the departing train. “Now for Twenty-Ninth Street.”

He had at once an odd feeling of going on a holiday with his friend and father-in-law—and an odd fear of his environment, a hostility, a homesickness. Mr Greville, however, had obviously only the holiday feeling. He moved with assurance along that cross-the-water platform, along the staircases and tunnels, and on to the deck of the huge ferry as if he had been in Canterbury South Eastern itself. He kept Don perfectly straight, holding him by the elbow when he wished to ask of a man in blue trousers when the doors would open. He told a lady who sat by the

doors on a seat that she was quite right for Twenty-Third Street, and she told him in return that she had come that day from Gloucester and was going on that night to Philadelphia. Having so memorised his plans, his maps and his time-tables that he couldn't go wrong, he made to Don—as they hung to the outside of a trolley whirling up between the piers of Sixth Avenue—he made to Don the assertion that New York *was* exceedingly practically laid out. And all that poor Don—in the dusk, with the lights glaring out in the squalid shops, with the “L” trains thundering overhead, with the supports of the Elevated brushing his elbow as they rushed past, with the paper, the straw and the dust whirling out at the wind of their moving—all that Don could find to answer was that if New York were practically laid out it hardly seemed worth doing if the best material they could find to work in were Sixth Avenues.

They crossed, slightly perilously, the greasy granite side of the roadway, and passed into the blue and purple tranquillity of the evening air in the cross street. It was naturally Don who stumbled rather heavily over a hollow where a square of paving stone was missing from the sidewalk, and it was Don who groaned. It was Mr Greville who said seriously that if they allowed their city to be governed by Irishmen that was what they must expect. And all his Saxon prejudice against the troublesome Islanders spoke in his voice.

He stopped Don at the mouth of what appeared to be a cave, and said:

"This is No. 19!" And looking down, Don uttered an exclamation.

"It's he!" he cried: "it's certainly Kratzenstein!"

The sheeted figure of a man lay back in a red velvet chair; there were cloths about his face, but over him, negligently and assuredly, stood a fat, hook-nosed, grey-whiskered man in gold spectacles.

"It's certainly Kratzenstein," Don repeated, and as a hot blast came from the cave and swept across their faces he uttered: "That's the *very* smell!"

They took an instinctive turn further up the street.

"It's obviously appropriate," Mr Greville said, "that the first person you should be in a position to make reparation to should be your father's first victim. You'd better," he added, "let me do the initial talking to him."

They were standing beneath the glass portico of an hotel, and through the open door, up the steps, they had a view of three negroes in blue, high-coloured uniforms.

"The point is," Don said, "what am I to offer him?"

Mr Greville considered the point, and gazing at the lift that inside the hotel came down and disgorged a girl in white feathers and a chocolate-coloured attendant, he uttered:

"The point is, what he'll be contented with."

"You've a more mathematical mind than I," Don said. "How does it work out? Say we put it that my father made him a loan of \$700,000

when he stole the mine thirty years ago and we allow interest at five per cent."

Mr Greville, with his eyes upon the girl in white, who was leaning across the office counter, made an absent calculation. But before he could utter anything Don had said:

"But I want to be fair. I've got to consider my father's other victims. And the people Kratzenstein stole the mine from. And I've got to consider that but for my father's genius the mine might never have been proved to be workable, or it might have been discovered by a third party. I want to get at not only the mathematical chances but the moral chances. For supposing Kratzenstein had had his rights thirty years ago, mightn't he have made infinitely more than the compound interest on \$700,000 at five per cent? Mightn't he be now the richest citizen in the world? "

He surveyed his father-in-law elect with a mildly humorous glance whilst one of the negroes came down the steps and asked them if they wanted any gentlemen in that hotel. Don said sharply that he didn't: that it was a free country and that wasn't the hotel's sidewalk. The negro said that if they were calculating on seeing any of the actress troupe that were there they wouldn't, for they'd gone round the town on a Seeing-New-York trip. The lift disappeared and came down again with a fat man with a red tie and a sombrero.

"It's impossible to know *what* to do," Don said, "there are millions of considerations."

Mr Greville seriously considered the man in the

sombrero, who was leaning over the office counter beside the girl in white. She was laughing with the clerk: the clerk had grey hair, an English manner, and a pleasant, tired smile.

"I should say," he said, "that you'd better make the acquaintance of Mr Kratzenstein and then act upon impulse as he affects you."

"But," Don said, "I don't want to act upon impulse. I want to discover what are the moral responsibilities. It sounds ridiculous: but I'm quite in earnest."

The lift went up again and came down once more with four young men in bowlers and *négligé* shirts. They all went to lean over the office counter and waited patiently whilst the young lady in white chatted with the pleasant clerk.

"That lift's very worrying to me," Mr Greville said, and they moved still further up the street till they came to where the sidewalk was entirely torn up before a vacant plot. And here the roar of the trolleys on Broadway made it necessary for Mr Greville to raise his voice.

"If you want my recommendations," he shouted, "I should suggest that you find out from him what he would consider to be a really comfortable affluence for himself and his children—and give him just that . . ."

It happened that along the blaze of Broadway there shot an immense ladder, with a wildly clamorous bell, and immediately afterwards the young lady in white, two negroes, a man in shirt sleeves and a very agile, fat Irishman, jostled hastily past

them. Mr Greville's voice came eventually out of the dwindling tumult:

"The first thing to do is to see the man; without that you can't form any judgment as to whether he'd have made a fortune or whether he'd have used it well or ill."

"I guess," Don said discouragingly, "they'll find it easier to settle that fire they're off to than I'll find it to settle what I'm to do."

"Oh, see your man first," Mr Greville said.

As they passed the hotel door Mr Greville noted that the fat man in the cowboy hat, and the four young men in bowlers, reinforced now by two more without any hats at all, were still leaning over the office counter asking for their mails. The pleasant-looking clerk was not visible.

"I should suppose," he said, "that you use a good deal of time over obtaining your correspondence in this country."

But even Mr Greville was not able to extract very much from Mr Kratzenstein. He desired his evening shave. But the old gentleman, with his profuse white waistcoat, his alpaca coat and his gold pince-nez, was of opinion that Mr Greville's hair would be much better for a cut. With a slow, benevolent and authoritative manner: "It looks," he said, "dam foolish like that."

Mr Greville said that he was in the habit of having his hair cut only by one barber—in the Haymarket.

"Better have your hair cut," Mr Kratzenstein answered, and having put on another pair of pince-nez with steel rims he added once more, as if he were

satisfied with his new inspection, that it looked dam foolish like that.

And whilst, with a fat and benevolent deliberation, he waddled round his subterranean store, fetching bits of cotton wool, face cloths, sponges and essences, he amiably countered Mr Greville's attempt to speak about Montana with:

"Ah! I guess'd you'd come to talk to Kratzenstein about that. But it's dam foolishness. What you know about Montana if I talk?—English pibble doand know about Montana. I serve my apprenticeship in the shop you talk about in the Haymarket. I kep' a shop of my own in Ladbroke Grove, London, before I sell it to go West. I ken talk about London, Eng., and about Hamburg, where I come from. But what you know about Montana? Nothing. Better haf your hair cut."

He continued to mutter that he'd guessed they'd come to Kratzenstein to talk about Montana; whilst tilting Mr Greville and the velvet chair bodily backwards he suddenly became both speechless and motionless.

"Your hair *does* look foolish like that," he said; and receiving no answer he continued suddenly: "All these journalist fellows is foolish . . ."

Mr Greville's head against the velvet rest let his face look up at the fly papers dangling from the low ceiling: it wore an air of unruffled calm as if he were in bed.

"You've had the journalists at you?" he asked, "about the late Mr Kelleg?"

Mr Kratzenstein stood with the lather brush

elevated in his hand; he peered at Mr Greville's face above his glasses, put on another pair and looked at him again.

"Staying in the hotel?" he asked; and to Mr Greville's question of what hotel, he answered shortly, "*Dis* is a hotel." And he added: "So you ain't stayin' in the hotel." He put the lather brush upon Mr Greville's chin, stayed to reflect a moment, and above his glasses, without moving his head, looked at Don, who, in an agony of solicitude as to Mr Greville's temper, was sitting against a fly-blown mirror with a red velvet frame, upon a very hard red velvet bench.

"If you ain'd stayin' in the hotel," he said, "and if you ain'd read the New York papers, how'd you come to know of me and old man Kelleg?"

"Suppose," said Mr Greville, with the utmost equanimity, "I'd read the article about you in the magazine a year ago."

Mr Kratzenstein continued to lather his customer for a full three minutes without speaking. Then he put on his glasses with the gold rims and took up his razor.

"Suppose you had!" he said, and commenced his stropping with an air of a doctor leisurely engaged in operation.

Mr Greville winced his eyes a little under the tickle of the drying lather.

"Suppose then, in addition, that Mr Kelleg's son, considering the story of the mine, were anxious to make you reparation."

Mr Kratzenstein waddled slowly from the marble slab to Mr Greville's head.

"Suppose that too!" he said. Mr Greville took refuge in silence and Mr Kratzenstein shaved. At last he brought out: "What does Don Kelleg know about the mine?" Mr Greville answered that he knew what had appeared in the magazine, and Mr Kratzenstein, who had removed one half the lather, baring Mr Greville's face to the centre of the chin, came again to a halt, the razor raised in his fat, greyish hand.

"Let's put it in words," he said. He removed the rest of the beard and then spoke: "Don Kelleg knows that I was bankrupt for 600 dollars. Don Kelleg knows that I made over the mine in secret to his father to cheat my creditors. Don Kelleg knows that when my bankruptcy was over and I wanted the mine back his father didn't give it . . ."

He waddled to the basin in the recess of the store, turned on a tap and dipped a towel in water. And suddenly he turned, shaking apparently with fury.

"If Don Collar Kelleg," he said, "was to come here offering me his charity I'd bat him on the pants as I've done fifty times already."

He waddled swiftly to Mr Greville and upon his motionless, brown face dropped suddenly the towel, that was so hot that Mr Greville's legs drew themselves up in the chair. He kept the towel pressed down with his hands, and above Mr Greville's invisible eyes and forehead brought out:

"I'm a free citizen of a free country. I haven't no use for charity."

Don dropped his eyes upon the floor.

"Reporters and churnalists and drummers and touts haf bin coming all the week," he said. "I'm sick of talkin'. I've got a house of my own above the Palisades: I've got a wife of my own: I've got two boys of mine own at College. I don't want charity."

He removed the towel from Mr Greville's face, and waddling back and forward between the basin and the head of his patient with new towels of different temperatures kept up a long monologue in a language that, as he approached agitation, grew more incomprehensible. But it bore itself gradually to Don's senses that Mr Kratzenstein accepted the fact that his father's robbing him of the mine was a perfectly legitimate stroke of business: that Mr Kratzenstein had been an adventurer all over the world: that, as he phrased it, he hadn't gathered no moss to speak of, but that he'd kick in an unpoetical region any man who offered him a penny he hadn't a right to or couldn't steal.

"So that that," Don said, breaking the silence for the first time, "is your last word?"

Kratzenstein was rubbing cold cream, with weighty fingers, into the skin of Mr Greville's cheeks. He looked at Don askew with a sedate, jocular, heavy manner.

"You ain'd changed much," he said, and rubbed a little more, with his finger tips. He chuckled in a very oily manner without moving a feature of his heavy, tired face. "D'you suppose I didn't know

you the first moment you came down my steps, Don Collar Kelleg? ”

He pulled the towel deliberately from above Mr Greville's form and wheezily set the chair to its vertical position.

“As you ain'd made me no offer of charity I ain'd got no call to be grouchy. But doan'd you do it! Doan'd you do it! ”

He proceeded to enlarge upon what it was to be a citizen of a free country and told Don not to come the Englishman over him. He said he'd never made much dollars and never supposed he would: he'd been a rolling stone. He'd been all over the world from Hamburg to 'Frisco and back again to N' York. And there he was. He squared at Don his massive chest and great white waistcoat. His hooked nose, his gold glasses, his black coat and his air of being a specialist whom you might consult as to your ailments, and the slightly truculent gleam in his eyes—all these things carried very weightily the idea that he was not a man you could do anything for. And faced with that “proposition” Don hadn't a word to say. Mr Greville too was quite silent—there wasn't any room for action from him. But suddenly an arch look came into Kratzenstein's grey, flabby features.

“I ain'd hog-proud!” he said. “I've just a thousand shares in the Carey Gold Co. They ain'd worth a penny: there's no gold there and no engines. But if you're the man your father was you can make those shares go up to four hundred dollars apiece! ”

"But," Don said. . .

Kratzenstein surveyed him above his glasses, and Don continued:

"If there's no gold it would be robbing the public!"

Kratzenstein chuckled: he put his hands upon his sides, he put his hands to his face, he pulled off his glasses, and he burst into a volcanic peal of laughter.

"De best . . . choke . . . I've effer . . . heard!" he panted. "And from *your* father's son!"

He resumed a sudden immobility.

"That's the only thing I'll take from you, Mr Don Collar Kelleg," he said. "You kin do it. Make them shares worth four hundred apiece. It's what one friend can do for another . . ."

He wouldn't, in his view, lose caste in accepting that service.

The episode gave, as it were, the note to all Don's experience of New York—amongst, at least, that part of the population that was in any way Americanised. As he said to Eleanor and her father at the end of the fortnight they spent in the city: What the population wanted of you was not the abolition of Trusts, it was just the chance to turn worthless stocks into half a million dollars. He wouldn't have minded if Kratzenstein had asked him to advertise a pomade of his own invention: he would have minded still less if Kratzenstein had asked him to advertise his saloon in each one of the 21,000 papers

of the United States. But Kratzenstein had been, as it were, given a wish—as in the old days men were given wishes by favouring gods—and the only wish that his independence had allowed him to accept carried with it the swindling of the whole community.

“Rigging the market! Rigging the market! That’s the note of New York!” he said in his bitterness.

He didn’t, indeed, utter it in haste, though he may have formed the opinion before ever he began his investigations. But he had, at least, the caution to make investigations that took up the greater part of fourteen days, and he had experiences that tended to harden his ideas. His step-mother sent him down from Boston, with the Pullman car that she returned to be at his disposal, a mild, smooth-haired, smooth-faced and very quiet young man who had been his father’s secretary when he travelled. His father’s other secretaries were all working as hard as could be at producing some sort of statement of accounts. The young man was actually a Scotchman, but you couldn’t have told him from a Harvard graduate; his name was Saunders, and Don’s first impulse was to pack him about his business. He was going to destroy all his father’s work: he was going to dismiss all his father’s agents. But the thought came to him that he hadn’t the right to do this. This young man—whose home appeared to be the Pullman, so solely had his duties consisted of attending to Mr Kelleg when he travelled,—this young man, in addition to his payment for service

that had undoubtedly been faithful, had established a claim to some sort of a career. It was Don's duty to satisfy this claim: he couldn't turn Saunders adrift!

Very happily it turned out that Saunders hadn't ever had very much to do with the details of Don's father's business: his principal function seemed to have been to aid Mr Kelleg in getting about. He had at his fingers' ends not so much the prices of railway stocks as the contents of all the railway timetables, the disposition of all the lines of rails, the knowledge of what train could be stopped to make way for Mr Kelleg's "Special" and of what—they were very few—couldn't. If Mr Kelleg had wanted to rush—as he very frequently did—from Hut, Ma., to New York, N.Y., it had been Saunders's business to clear all the lines, right across the continent: he had to pull all the wires, have all the trains out of the way, and impress all the railway officials with the sense that to keep Mr Kelleg's train waiting two minutes was to cause the ruin of that system for ever.

He was, in fact, the king of couriers, and since it was Don's business to see New York in fourteen days, he was, very exactly, the man to lead Don and his father-in-law about the poorer streets. He did it with absolute efficiency: they visited the negro quarters, they visited the lowest American white quarters; they spent two whole days among the Jews and half a day in the underground passages of the Chinese; they ate incredible dishes in Hungarian restaurants; they saw wild dances in Bosnian

cafés; they saw the trolley cars in one of the cross-town streets down by Eleventh Avenue bombarded by brickbats from the house tops; they even heard revolver shots fired from side to side of the street that was half negro and half white. The foul atmospheres gave them bad headaches; the language of the Ward politicians that they interviewed across the zinc counters of their saloons—the language of these huge, obese, hard-voiced men addled their very senses of hearing: the world seemed to Don so horribly brown, so crowded, so foul, so arrogant, so vile, that he hadn't any eyes at all for the blue, tranquil and light-begemmed nights of the tiny and soaring city.

They were—he and Mr Greville—very efficiently guided, and if Mr Greville saw reason to imagine that a riot between a colony of toughs in a turning off Pearl Street—a riot from which they escaped with a decided sense of danger—if Mr Greville saw reason to believe that this riot had been actually engineered by the efficient Saunders, with the aid of several obese and benevolent policemen and three or four prize-fighters, there wasn't the least doubt that one man—Don visited him in hospital—was actually killed with a pickaxe. And Don had the comment to make that it showed a horrible social order when you could have men fight and bribe policemen to manage the tumult. If it wasn't an exhibition of a real tumult he was just as much obliged to Saunders for showing him how it was possible to “arrange” something that, morally considered, was infinitely worse.

The Press, too, filled him with an equal horror. If the papers hadn't got word of the fact that he was in New York they *had* got hold of several of his early friends with whom he had studied Art in Paris. And it grieved him more than anything that a man he'd really loved—a man he'd regarded as a genius—should have sold to the *New York H*—— a photograph that Don had given him, together with a string of confidences—including the anecdote of the Master who had told Don that he was a muff—and including the fact that Don was engaged to Eleanor. The *New York H*—— published indeed a photograph of a well-known London music-hall star artiste labelled: "*Photo of Eleanor,*" and with a headline all across the page: "*Eleanor collars Collar ! Richest American potted by British Pauper Portraitist !*" And the intimate friend had added three columns of Eleanor's own conversation.

As Don put it in apologising to her, they would have to expect that sort of thing of the papers. They couldn't object to the *Sunday N*——, which replied to the details of the *New York H*—— with ten columns of simple inventions about the pair of them. They hadn't any right to worry about the inventions of New York. What was lamentable was that all the use the United States could make of a man—their former fellow-student—whom they both remembered as a genius, was to set him to betray confidences. They couldn't use him as an artist: he was starving: they could make use of his dishonourable gossip. But by an odd coincidence a little adventure of Mr Greville found its

way into all the New York papers. Mr Greville, in returning from the post-office upon a Broadway trolley, had, by a sort of miracle, found a seat. Next him there had sat a Californian fruit-grower who had insisted on forcing on Mr Greville a huge and red-cheeked apple, adding over and over again:

“Eat it: eat it right now. It’s a peach!”

And Mr Greville, reclining in the palm-filled marble office of the hotel, had taken the apple from the tail-pocket of his frock-coat and had remarked to an interested stranger on the oddness of that locution. And next day all the New York papers were filled with headlines: “*British Peer and Peach. Earl of Greville goes one on Adam.*” Because Mr Greville had refused to eat an apple.

But if, on the other hand, Don had set out to see the blacknesses, Eleanor had found the good time that Don was so anxious for her to have—the good time that, for his sake, she was quite determined to secure. The train that brought the travelling secretary of Mr Kelleg had brought also his travelling stenographer—a lady called Dubosc, half Irish and half Manhattan Dutch. Tall, with a tight, sweet figure, reddish hair, and brownish, golden, short-sighted eyes, Miss Dubosc was, Eleanor found, exactly the person to help her in seeing New York. They went to all sorts of places that Eleanor found gay and excellently arranged; they walked with a sense of freedom and delight right from Washington Square to the Art Gallery; they shopped at the hugest shops; they went even with a gay male

friend of Miss Dubosc to the last big baseball match of the season: they lunched, with the same young friend, in the last-discovered Italian restaurant, where, on broken-backed chairs, in a back-yard, beneath strings of washing, they ate little messes of rice and tomatoes and laughed extravagantly.

They spent the evenings—Don and Eleanor alone—in going to innumerable theatres that Don found uniformly vulgar and abject. And Eleanor reminded him that there weren't two decent pieces ever to be seen in London at once. And when they went with her father to Coney Island by boat—she insisted on it because she was certain that Don was growing ill—she became almost angry because he refused to see how fairy-like was the aspect of New York Bay at night. He couldn't see it simply because he was so filled with the idea that the illuminated dime-shows to be found in Coney Island itself were imbecile and degrading that he couldn't see anything at all. The good behaviour, the good order, the cheerfulness, the decorum of the crowd—the things that to her were noticeable—counted to him for nothing: the lights counted for nothing: the pleasure counted for nothing. He couldn't let himself go: he wandered in the blaze, in the crowd, by her side or by her father's with a dizzy gloom. This, he said, was the best they could do then! And there wasn't a trace of refinement, of intellect—even of thought.

And if Eleanor could not, truthfully, contend that there was any trace of thought in watching dazed-

looking Indians playing with rattlesnakes, in having a megaphone bellow in your ear that for ten cents you could have your future husband's name told, in watching innumerable dancers in a diffused blaze of light whirl with set faces to the sound of the most brazen band on earth on a floor that was so much the largest and slipperiest on earth that you couldn't distinguish objects at its further end—if she couldn't, in Coney Island, find anything uplifting, she could, when they were in the blue night of the steamer, going back, confess that it had made her contagiously happy to be with so many nice people who themselves were all so happy. It was true that at the Bowery Restaurant, where they had eaten a dinner that was quite better than anything they got at their hotel, served by waiters at least more cheerfully polite than any they had at their hotel, in a crowd that numbered three thousand, the night before a gentleman had gone mad and emptied his revolver, killing three people and escaping entirely. But she remembered that two years before the same thing had happened in the best *café* in Rome five minutes after she had left it—and poor, bright, luminous, happy Coney Island had been built in a day. And, as she put it, she had been going about with forty thousand people for four hours yet not a single unpleasant word had been uttered to her; it couldn't, she triumphantly said, have happened anywhere in Europe. She couldn't even imagine herself doing such a thing.

And where, she asked, when the steamer had put off, could they find anything more really beautiful

than that scene! They were, in deep blackness, on a crowded deck, in air so fresh that it was more than comfortable for her father when she insisted on turning up his collar. They were upon smooth, dimpled water, and in the blue-black nothingness of the night, with the heads of the passengers, the funnels and rails silhouetted in a singular effect of silence, they saw the domes, the minarets, the towers, the fountains, existing in lines, in masses, in globes, in flames of fire, with below them a blaze of reflection streaking down the black waters. The stillness, the absolute beauty and the distance made her say:

“It’s taken New York to make that!”

Don groaned, and the voice of a young girl, with a burred, hard accent that she could already distinguish as of New England, uttered a long string of incomprehensible words. “One — two — nine — paper — seven — four — sumach — eighteen — eleven — ninety-one — orange . . .” And the voice, lowered and confidential, that Eleanor knew to be the girl’s lover’s, corrected her gently from time to time. They sat there in the beneficent coolness surrounded by lovers, and the sound of this little, idiotic ritual — for it was evidently some ritual — filled her with such satisfaction — it was all so appropriate a setting for love and satisfaction — that she half had it in her to add to her: “It’s taken New York to make that!” a rather heated: “And if it were all New York had done, it’s so ideal, for simple people, that New York would be justified of its existence.”

She did not say so, because at the same moment

it struck her that it was like Canzano—that it would seem tantamount to saying that because New York had given *her* a new sensation New York was justified of its existence. But she was aware, too, that what in justice to herself she really meant was that New York was justified because it could give to so many of its very poorest a sight that was so supremely touching. It had taken New York to make a Coney Island—to set so many ingenious brains working to turn out little, meretricious, thoughtless “attractions” that in the sum made up a mass of light and gaiety, in the dark night, so supremely attractive. She had had at least enough of an art student’s education to be able to believe that the emotion one feels before something of a unique beauty was as valuable as an ethical or intellectual discovery. . . . And here she had felt an emotion—and she believed that it was open to every New York pauper to have identically such an emotion. But she hated even to feel angry with Don, and she uttered a quite pleasantly bantering:

“Dear boy! If you want William Morris effects and floppy gowns this isn’t surely the place to come to for them!”

She had, the afternoon before, visited with his father’s stenographer, the attractive Miss Dubosc, a Settlement way back in the State of New Jersey, a settlement that had seemed to her the most unattractive, because it was the most self-conscious thing she had yet seen. Here there were disagreeable-looking women talking of book-bindings, unhealthy-looking men talking about printing, egregiously

precocious children talking about living a higher life—people in ugly woollen garments and people with practically no garments at all—all talking about turning out rough, ugly china, books, or axe handles with rough, ugly ornamentations. She had seen, of course, the same sort of thing at home, but in Jersey State it appeared to her to be vicious instead of merely silly . . .

Seated beside her, his collar, too, turned up to his ears, Don groaned again.

“Listen to those idiots!” he said.

He was referring to the lovers who were drawling out—together now—“Ninety-three—ninety-seven—pumpkin—ninety—a hundred—Halleluja—”

And at his contemptuous reference to what to her seemed so sacred just because it was so senseless, so healthy just because it was so unself-conscious, she could not help saying hotly:

“Don’t you think *we* should be better employed . . .”

But she didn’t finish her sentence because the steamer happened to hoot, and when it had finished a couple of dimly-visible Italians, with hardly visible, odd, musical instruments, appeared in the gloom and began to bring out strangely and glamorously the sounds of a lilting song that she recognised as having set to it the words: “On the shady side of Broadway . . .”

Don said: “Oh, hell!” and plunged from her side. Immediately afterwards she heard his voice saying: “I’ll give you a hundred-dollar bill to throw those fiddles over the side . . .”

She was on her feet: she had already said hotly:

"Oh, it's too bad! All these people *want* the music!"

But he did not hear her because one of the Italians was trying to explain to him in incomprehensible language that the violin and the odd wind-organ were the property of the shipping company . . .

Don slunk back bitterly to his seat.

"For all I know," he said to Eleanor, "the shipping company's my property too. But I tell you I'll buy it up if it isn't. I'll buy up Coney Island. I'll suppress the whole thing!"

Eleanor was dejectedly silent. It occurred to her that she had been frightfully angry, with Don too: and she hated to have been angry: she couldn't remember to have been angry for years and years. And then she began to argue with him, gently and calmly. In the darkness she took hold of his hand. She was determined to make him see that the scene was beautiful, and the lovers around them in the right to love rhythmical, inane tunes and rituals. She pointed out to him, in the darkness, how orderly and how gentle all these people were. . . . And at last, quite suddenly, the inevitable happened. He brought out:

"Then I'd better go back to England!"

She said:

"Oh, dear! Why in the world?"

"Because," he said, with an agitating energy of self-depreciation, "you're right and I'm wrong. Of course you're right. There isn't anything more poetic

than poor, gentle, little people seeking for pleasure. What can *I* do here? I can't see anything."

But the suddenness with which he had reacted from his quite passionate point of view towards hers that was so entirely opposite was to her as disturbing as his former fury.

"Dear," she said, "the trouble is that you see too much."

He let his head hang dejectedly for a long while. The water rustled loudly around the steamer: the sound of the fiddle and the organ came from within the boat: a tired father for the fourth time picked up a little boy that *would* fall from a too crazy stool, and like a portent, far away to the left, another of those centres of pleasures, with domes and pyramids of fire, hung in the blue, dark sky and sent trails of fire towards them down the waters. He said at last:

"I'm no use. I think and think. And then at the last moment I do the very wrongest thing. I see now that it was positively cruel to interfere with that little tinkling noise. But at the time I thought it was degrading. The fact is that there's a poetry in these things that I don't see and that you do. . . ." He reflected again and then added:

"No: I tell you quite plainly that if it weren't that I can break up my father's Trusts I'd go back to England to-morrow."

"If you did . . ." Eleanor was beginning. But from the dark, silent, but always attentive, form of Mr Greville there came decisive tones:

"Before you speak, my dear," he said—"I may

say before you even form an opinion, just reflect upon what Don's position actually is."

Mr Greville stood up before them and his hat became bluishly silhouetted against the clear sky.

"You were meaning to say that Don would make you angry if he committed himself to any course of action and then drew back. That's what you mean, isn't it?"

"Isn't that what he would be doing?" Eleanor asked.

A very decided "No!" came from Mr Greville.

Eleanor reflected for a long time: at last her father continued:

"Get the facts quite clear in your mind. The facts are the only things that matter. Don't let yourself be carried away by your own personal emotions. Don hasn't committed himself to anything but breaking up his father's Trusts. He still, you may say, means to do that. But to do that doesn't postulate remaining in this country. It doesn't mean that he must remain in a country that he obviously can't understand or sympathise with. It doesn't necessitate that: he may or he may not . . ."

"But how," Eleanor asked, "can he be certain that it would be for the good of the country if he did break up the Trusts? Mayn't they be good too? Can he decide before he's seen more?"

Mr Greville pondered for a very little while.

"Oh, that," he said, "is so much in his character that I don't think even *he* could see the other side of it!" And he added, after a pause: "The whole thing amounts to this: Don is, as you've said often

enough, a poet. But he's like me in being hopelessly out of date with his time. You're exactly right when you say that he's more in touch with Æsthetic Settlements than he could ever be with Coney Island. . . ." Eleanor realised that her father was really going to make a very long speech: she realised that he was defending Don with a sort of wholeheartedness that she had never heard him use before, and that he was actually pleading with her in the darkness. He was pleading with her to elucidify her sense of right and wrong: he was trying to make her see that she mustn't mix up the wrongness of an individual with wrong views of the necessities of a nation. She felt intuitively that he was really saying: "Don's in this matter perfectly right to abdicate. He's right to see that his brain isn't fit to face these problems that he couldn't get hold of. It isn't, in this case, a weakness. It's a strength." Actually he was saying: "Don is acting precisely as I've acted all my life. He hates modern circumstances. I don't say that he wants what *I* want. He doesn't. He isn't for the Tory Party right or wrong. But he *is* for Æstheticism right or wrong. He *does*, really, want the American people to go in for certain European virtues—for Poetry and the Higher Thought and Rational Dress. Well, they can't! How can they? America is made up of men who've fled from him just as much as they've fled from me. It's made up of people who left Europe because they could not stand Tory restraints or Poetic restraints. How in the world could he impose himself on this steamboat? These people wouldn't

like a fourteenth-century air played on a virginal. They want a tune called 'On the Shady Side of Broadway' played on something that makes a braying noise. I'll admit that it's poetic from one point of view. I'll admit that you've given an admirable exposition of the point of view. But to Don and me it will always remain beastly!"

"But," Eleanor said, "New York isn't America. The West's America. Miss Dubosc has told me! Don hasn't seen the West."

"My dear child," Mr Greville said, "how can you be so disingenuous? You don't pretend to imagine that you think cowboys and miners aren't even newer than New York. Do you think that Don is going to be able to convert *them* to mediæval gowns or a love for Fra Angelico?"

He didn't wait for any answer to that knock-down blow and Eleanor, whilst Don was explaining to her how exactly her father had *really* "sized him up," brought out towards his retreating figure:

"Aren't you really merely trying to set Don against this country because you hate this country?"

Mr Greville came slowly back to say:

"Aren't you trying to make Don love this country because, out of affection for him, you've hypnotised yourself into loving things that normally you couldn't stand?"

He stood right before her again, back upon his heels.

"This steamer isn't really more orderly than a Greenwich steamer. Coney Island is not, really, more delightful than Earl's Court. New York isn't

really more beautiful than London. You like it because you've got yourself in the mood to like it. But that's not the point. The point is that Don isn't, really, any more the proper person to regenerate New York than I'm the person to regenerate London. I've got the sense not to try it for London: you ought to have the sense to be glad that he isn't going to try it for New York."

He was silent for a minute and then he said:

"My dear, you haven't begun to think because you're so anxious to see Don act. How could he ever understand America? How could any one ever understand America or the future of America? You can't tell anything about it. You can't tell that in a hundred years it won't be populated entirely by Latins and Sclavs. Do you understand that at present that seems to be its probable fate? Well, then, what would be the good of Don's trying to form the future of a mixed race of Latins and Sclavs—and negroes? How could he? He doesn't understand them: he never could. And the best thing he could do—the most heroic action—is to have the self-restraint to abstain from muddling."

He turned upon his heel and in the light from the hatchway they saw him pick up the tired man's child that had once more fallen from the rickety stool.

Eleanor remained for a long time silent: it was Don who did the talking.

"At bottom he's exactly right," he said, "though he doesn't explain my actual feelings. My actual feelings are simply bewilderment—and horror." And he went on to describe his bewilderment and his

horror. He had been simply appalled at New York—at its squalid back streets, at its hard voices, at its hideous language, at its physical recklessness, and at the fact that he hadn't discovered, anywhere, a trace of desire for anything morally better. They only wanted, all these people, plush instead of cotton, six-course dinners instead of one meal of canned meat, a chance of a million dollars instead of a daily wage of one dollar twenty-five cents. "Of course," he said, "I don't say they won't develop ideals. But they can't ever be my ideals. I can't understand things. I'm bewildered: I'm frightened, and oh—I'm dreadfully tired."

She put, in the darkness, her arm round his neck and pulled his head down to her shoulder.

"Dear," she whispered, "I'm a brute, and you're right. You aren't the man to do these things, and oh, my own thing, if you're just going to be my man and nothing else, oughtn't I to welcome it!"

But he couldn't rest there: he raised his head and then stood on his feet before her.

"I know," he said, "that you'll despise me. I'm not the sort of brave knight that a woman wants."

"Oh, dear," she said tenderly, "a woman wants a lover. I don't believe that, even when there were knights, women didn't love the men that stayed at home—if they were fated to love them—more than they loved the Lancelots."

"But you," he said, "you would have loved a Lancelot."

"Oh, dear," she answered again, "I only want a lover who'll know what he wants."

But even at that he couldn't say more than:

"Let's walk up and down!" And if she remembered another blackness upon another steamer, and another lover, she made for him the quick excuse that he was, poor dear, after all his runnings about in foul air and squalid surroundings, in a state of nervous, quivering exhaustion.

And all the same, when they stood in the bows and saw, majestic and overwhelming, the great man-made cliffs, the twinkling lights that seemed like those of cottages on a mountain—when she saw that unforgettable sight that Don still pished at, she couldn't help thinking that her father *had* been unjust to her. It was, in the blackness, above the waters, with its mysteries of a harbour and the feeling that it gave her of men striving to climb to heaven, this great conglomeration of human efforts was, to her, supremely beautiful and unforgettable. She couldn't help feeling regret at the thought that this was probably the last time in her life that she should ever see this hill that seemed with all its lit windows to be a mass of gnomes' fires; she couldn't help believing that she'd have been moved by it in any case. And she couldn't help thinking that it was ironical that if she had—and with her woman's desire for submission she tried to believe it—if she had forced herself to admire these things for Don's sake, that very admiration, arising out of her love, should have brought her so near to her first sense of disunion with him.

"I shall have," Don said, "to give a certain amount of time to studying factory conditions now," and he

added: " but if it weren't the fact that I'm the master of my father's enterprises I'd leave this beastly country to-morrow."

And something panic-stricken and almost cruel in his tone made her say:

" I wish, dear, that we could! "

She was really afraid that he was going to be ill.

CHAPTER V

THE power to put their wish into effect came that evening.

They were going to sup, for the fresh air of the boat had given them all appetites that there was no dissembling, when there came to Don a message that he was wanted at the special telephone line he had had held for him between their rooms and Mrs Kelleg's house in Boston. And whilst Don went Eleanor sat herself down in her hat and coat—she was too tired to do any dressing—in the dim, dusty lounge at the side of the entrance door. It seemed to her that, upon the whole, this was the quietest place in New York, and though it wasn't rational to want quiet in New York she did certainly need it. The ottomans had a soiled splendour, the light fell bluey from Oriental mosque-lamps that, oddly enough, were of red glass; there were settees draped with Persian carpets, little black stools that might have been of walnut wood, a slightly misty, slightly smoky tinge in the air, and a general feeling of desertion. She lay back in a stuffy arm-chair and made ready to rest for ten minutes. There didn't seem anything left for her to do; there didn't seem anything left for her to say. If she wasn't any longer to try to make Don like his own

country there was no need for her to try to do anything.

From the far corner of the room came the monotonous, restless, querulous, high sound of an American woman's voice: it was the sort of sound that you couldn't possibly much want to listen to—but it wasn't at all troublesome. If it wasn't quite as soft as the cooing of doves it wasn't as nervously exasperating as the cackle of poultry. She made out in the dim light, and gradually, a dark, feeble-looking, French-looking, endlessly-talking girl, who showed in her profile dark eyelashes that softened her eyes and a large, weak nose. And, as gradually as she made her out, Eleanor made out from her monotonous words that she had just got back from Europe and was talking, languidly but determinedly, about the Carlyle House. "Of course we visited those sacred precincts every day we were in the British metropolis! No, he wasn't—What a hero!—My! How can you say so?" (Her companion's voice was inaudible just as her companion was hidden.) "He *isn't* their property. He's ours! We've a thousand times more men of his kind than ever *they* had. *He* was an American at heart if ever there were one. Hadn't he got just all our virtues?"

Eleanor let her ears cease to attune themselves to the girl's voice: she began to count the beads on the transparent fringe that fell from the mosque-lamp. But suddenly the girl's voice rose to a shriek:

"His wife! That silly, vain, little thing! Did you ever hear what he wrote on her tombstone?"

‘The glory of my life has departed!’ Wasn’t that enough for her? Wasn’t that enough for any old Englishwoman? He was enough to give you the jimjams! How can you dare to sit there, Mrs Vandoff, and say so! I tell you he was a great and glorious genius. Oughtn’t any silly, vain Englishwoman to be proud of being the slave of such a hero! Why, I tell *you*, Mrs Vandoff, he’s had more effect on us and our thought than any man this side of George Washington. Isn’t that glorious enough for *any* Englishwoman if it *was* a martyrdom to live with him?” And the languid girl in the white blouse positively moved her hands in her excitement.

And Eleanor, with a little sigh, wondered how near it had come to her to be a silly, vain, Englishwoman, martyred to provide an influence for American thought. For decidedly that was what Don, at the outset, had prophesied would be her fate. And, in a sense, there couldn’t be the least doubt that Don was a sort of a genius . . .

“Nerves!” the dark girl shrieked out. “Of *course* he had nerves. Of *course* she had a bad time. But how *dare* you say it wasn’t her duty to bear it?”

A bell-boy was suddenly asking Eleanor to come to the young chap at the ‘phone. He wanted her pretty bad . . .

Don had found the little bell of the telephone in the Marie Antoinette cabinet impatiently and incessantly on the buzz. He had had—it had been the sole employment he’d made of wealth that was more like the lamp of Aladdin than anything he could

imagine—taken up a special line from his stepmother's house, where daily Augustus had been conferring with the trustees of the will, with attorneys, with the heads of departments, with the heads of other trusts in association with the Kelleg Combines. The gradual, small details of the huge business had come to him, bit by bit, over the wires in Augustus's voice. There wasn't any doubt that the wealth at his disposal would be so unthinkable as to be almost negligible. It figured up gradually, as interest after interest came to be investigated, at four million dollars the year, at seven, at twelve, at eighteen. . . . And at about that point Don had begged him to stop sending figures. It seemed likely that when they'd taken into account all the rail-lines, all the bakeries, all the factories, all the copper mines, all the everything that his father had dabbled with, it might go to fifty, it might go to a hundred million dollars a year. It had been for Don a sort of worrying, of disturbing, immensity. It had made him feel almost poor simply because he couldn't map out any sort of scale at which it would be thinkable that he and Eleanor could live. His mind could have gone to about ten thousand a year (English), but he would have been much more able to think of two—and he'd been accustomed to live simply upon four hundred.

He got at it too that although his stepmother had received from his father exactly all she'd asked for—all she'd asked for hadn't exceeded a few months' income of what had come to Don. And Canzano, too, who'd got a great deal more than he'd

expected, hadn't come in for more than a week's or so. . . .

Augustus's voice came sharp, small and clear to Don's ear:

"We've got it pretty well worked out after a fortnight's ciphering. The total amounts to . . ."

Don's head was aching: his hand that held the black and silver receiver quivered at his ear, he leant forward from Marie Antoinette's own favourite chair with his elbows on the polished wood of the little yellow cabinet. His mind was filled with rage and impatience: his brown eyebrows came down into a heavy scowl.

"Would you mind remembering," he called into the mouthpiece, "that I don't want to hear what it amounts to!" Sometimes he had a curiosity to know: at that moment he had an absolute hatred of the thought of this invisible, this maddening, this mere sound of huge figures. He was about to say: "Write it down: send it in a letter. I'll read it when I feel inclined," when he heard, faintly at his ear:

"I can't go now, mother. I can't. This is business!" And the words puzzled him a little. Then the voice took up loudly and with confidence:

"Oh, I'm sorry it annoys you. But it wasn't that I had to say. I have put *that* into a letter."

Don called: "Well!"

The wire that he had had installed was so perfect that he heard a faint, gleeful chuckle.

"What it's really necessary that you should know

is that I've seen to-day a secret agreement between your father and all his other associates."

Don said: "Well! well!"—and again he was conscious of a low, sibilant chuckle.

"It cuts both ways obviously enough," the voice said, "though no doubt your father meant it to bind only his associates to *him*. I've got the main provisions of it jotted down—it's all on one sheet of paper. But you'll remember that your father's will states that you inherit the income subject to all agreements entered into by him . . ."

It was at this point that Don—as if he were conscious of a malevolent influence in this colloquy with the invisible—begged him to wait a minute whilst he asked Eleanor to come up to him. He didn't, positively, like to be alone. The high panels with their tapestried shepherds, the chairs with their lyre-shaped backs against the walls, the lights in clusters upon the imitation wax of the candlesticks—all these things affected him deeply with a sense of solitude, a sense of smallness, a sense of impotence that he hadn't felt since he had been a small child. And the repeated mention of his father's name had brought a tense sense of his father again before him. His father had sat on those very chairs, had looked at those very pictures with his twinkling badger grey eyes of a man used to baffle and outwit. He suddenly felt as if his father were once more saying:

"Not this time, sonny!" as occasionally Mr Kelleg had said to him behind his mother's back when, in one of the endless "ructions" that these panels had witnessed—after, poor things, they had

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witnessed ructions how different in a France how distant—his father had winked at him and uttered those words that meant that his mother was worsted even in a battle of words. . . . He was aware that his legs trembled a little as he walked to the hotel telephone to send for Eleanor, but he sat down once more at the little cabinet and, resting his head upon his left hand, applied once more the receiver to his ear.

"It affects your schemes for breaking up the Trusts very materially," Augustus's voice came to him: "it amounts to this . . ." and the words paused: "that you're absolutely impotent. . . . Absolutely impotent . . . absolutely . . . absolutely . . . impotent!"

Eleanor didn't at first want to disturb him: she didn't, really, notice that his immobility was more than that of engrossed attention, and she stood quite still in the doorway watching him tenderly. But she thought: "How ill he looks, poor dear!" And, "How I wish we *could* go back to England."

And, for the first time, a sudden longing, a sudden homesickness overcame her. She remembered that the streets of Canterbury would be redolent with the smell of hops . . .

And suddenly she noticed that, beneath the streaming lights, Don's face was chalk white, with parted, quite silent lips. And then he groaned—and then his lips moved:

"Of course," his voice was just distinguishable: "of course it *would* be 'Not this time, sonny!' again."

She went quickly to the second earpiece that, for

her especial use, so that she too might always hear, he had had attached to the machine, and Augustus's voice struck her like a blow, clear, hard, hateful.

"The general effect of it is that if you tried to pull out of any engagement without the general consent, the penalties . . ."—she heard the rustle of paper as Augustus turned over the sheets that he was reading from—"the penalties you would have to pay would be so enormous that in a very few weeks—the penalties being by millions of dollars daily—all your interests would have passed into the hands of your associates. And that, I take it, would leave the things very much worse than if you continued to own them, for your associates are a fine set of sharks. Your father, in short, has simply fooled you. Mrs Kelleg has told me that from conversations he had with you in Boston formerly he thought he'd perfectly sized you up—that you wouldn't want money, you'd want power—so he's left you with all the money in the world, and you're simply absolutely powerless to change a thing. That was his intention and he's carried it out. You've got to have ninety-seven odd millions a year, but you can't interfere with the works one cent's worth. It's there in black and white. It's absolutely . . ."

It was at this point that Eleanor noticed Don. His head had fallen forward upon the hard surface of the cabinet, the little black and silver earpiece hung from its cord near the floor.

She called into the mouthpiece:

"You beast! Oh, you beast! He's fainted."

And she heard:

"I've got in on his self-sufficiency then. I've got in—I worked the melodrama . . ."

"D'you mean it's not true?" she cried.

"Oh, it's true," he said. "He's a mere gilded coupon. He's tied hand and foot. But I've rubbed it in. He won't chuckle again for a bit . . ."

Eleanor hung the receiver up.

PART IV

THICKER THAN WATER

I

HE hadn't, however, fainted. It was only that his head throbbed, and he didn't want to hear any more details. He was quite certain that if his father had desired to tie up his businesses his father was a man perfectly able to do so irrefutably. And he had a great desire for something cool upon his forehead. So that, quite composedly, his voice came to Eleanor's ears: "Oh, don't make me out a physically weaker man than I am. I've not fainted. I'm only putting my head on this cool wood . . ."

And he stood up a little unsteadily, resting the knuckles of his right hand upon the cabinet. His face was a little flushed and his voice a little thick, but he had it in him still to say:

"Aren't you rather hard on Augustus? It isn't *his* fault."

She considered him still so ill that she simply couldn't bring herself to say that the wretched little man, whom, by setting down the receiver, she had "cut off" for the last time, had done his satanic best to rub the announcement in. And she considered him still so ill that she didn't go towards him to take him into her arms.

He marched instead across the room, and finally

she knew, by the sudden clatter of hoofs and the sudden rustle of indistinguishable, pervading sounds, that he had thrown open a window for coolness.

It came into her head by a little association of ideas, for wasn't she now bound to send her thoughts homewards?

"Why, it sounds like London!" And she thought swiftly that Fifth Avenue is the only long road in New York that doesn't clang and rattle with trolley cars—the only place where you get away from the gong-like noise of bells and the metallic jingle of iron and granite—the only place where you hear the subdued, pensive, quick "clock-clock" that is the "note" of London's quietude.

He knelt upon the window-seat, his head far out, his brows seeking for coolness, his eyes watching with black distaste the wonderful, begemmed night. The house fronts before him were masses of purple, towering dimly on high, chequered with warm squares of light. Below him lights whirled and glided in the roadway, passing each other, turning slowly, or with dizzy and swift rushes interlacing. There was coolness, the rustle of footsteps, the tones of innumerable voices, and from round the corner came faintly and in gusts all the jingle and cries of blazing, contagious, jostling Broadway . . .

"It's all hopelessly material," he muttered aloud. "There's nothing that isn't blatant, vulgar, hideous!"

She had approached him swiftly and solicitously at his first sound . . .

When he turned his face to the left, Fifth Avenue, with its tall, electric light standards, with its immensely tall buildings, stretched out in the clearness for what seemed an incredible distance up-hill into the pale night of stars. When he looked to the right there rose before his eyes a pale, thin, translucent, immensely high and distant column of twinkling, squared windows. It soared right up, with something classical in its pure lines, with something fairy-like and insubstantial in the way its window spaces seemed to take away from it all its substance, with something gay, childlike and tender in its upward soar towards the shafts of light that whirled across the city. It seemed to stand, a tiny slice of cliff, with its feet in little ripples of humanity and of carriage lights, and towards the stars, from its apex, it threw up a plume of white steam . . .

"Oh, yes, it's beautiful," he muttered, "but it's the beauty of a sheer accident. It doesn't count. The man who built it never *thought* it would look like that . . ."

"Dear," she said, "isn't that the . . . the . . ." she faltered for a word, "isn't it just a little symbolical of humanity? It does beautiful things unconsciously."

He stood up, and at the closing of the window the lights and the sounds were dead at once.

"That's an end of it!" he said, and he held out his arms to her. "Now it's only you and me." And he gave a sudden and radiant smile.

She put both her hands upon his shoulders before she surrendered herself: she couldn't believe that he could have grown so soon "bitter."

"Are you certain?" she asked wistfully. "Isn't it just a phase of nervous excitement?"

"No," he answered her, "the other was the phase. The other was just the incident. We're going back. We're going to be real. We're going back to Cuddiford. We're going back . . ."

He spoke with a rhapsodising voice and she scrutinised his features a little anxiously . .

"Don't you remember?" he said, "I said—on the day this nonsense first began—that this excursion would be just like going down to the basement to get a hammer. Well, we've gone: we're going upstairs again. We haven't so much as got the hammer."

She couldn't even at that quite believe her joy.

"But don't you regret?" she asked.

"Regret?" he asked. "Regret that we're going back? Oh, not the least in the world. I regretted bringing you—*you*!—here. Don't you remember that—on the day this nonsense first began—I said that it wasn't power that was given to me—it was a burden. It was a duty. It wasn't even the sort of duty that I was fitted for . . ."

She still wouldn't take him: she kept him from her with her hands upon his shoulders. "You're excited," she said, "won't you think differently to-morrow?"

"Oh," he answered, and he smiled with a sort of radiance, "it was yesterday—it was during all this nightmare—that I've been excited. I never really

believed in my power. I had all along the feeling that my father was fooling me. It wasn't the sort of thing to be real. I moved myself to do it. But . . ." He ran his fingers through his hair. "Why!" he said, "on the morning we started I bought Cuddiford Manor. I *knew* we should go back."

But even though at that she took him to her, she couldn't help saying bodingly:

"Oh, I want you, dear, and I want you dreadfully, but I couldn't bear you to change again!"

And sitting beside him on the window-seat, with her hand upon his hot forehead, she told him how, at the urging of Canzano, she had set herself, for his sake, to learn to tolerate these foreign masses—to learn, as it were, so much that she could even teach him to love them.

"Love them!" he said bitterly. "I've learned this much: that I shall leave this money to accumulate and accumulate. It'll end by being all the money in their horrible world. And *then* . . ."

"And then?" she asked.

"They'll have," he said, with a harsh bitterness, "just to see their insensate folly." He paused and added: "That's the best thing I can do for them. That's the only lesson I'm fit to teach." "Why," he began again suddenly, tenderly and humorously: "what a folly to think that you could teach me to love New York! Wasn't it you who taught me to love just all that's made this seem unbearable? Wasn't it you who've made me yearn for spirit and fineness? Wasn't it you?"

"Dear!" she answered. "Dear!"

But a little later she put it:

"You've got it wrong," she said, "and I was wrong." It wasn't, she uttered, her business—a woman's part—to teach him to like things. It was her part to sustain him in what he wished, to bear with him his hardships. She asked him, in her turn, if he didn't remember what he'd said on the day the news had reached them, over there in the quiet, shadowed dining-room that hourly seemed to be growing more real a part of their lives. He didn't remember and she put it to him. He had said that what was most astonishing in the lives of American paupers was the way tenderly-nurtured English-women bore hardships by their men's sides.

"That's what it's our business to do," she said—and she was speaking of her sex, her country-women, and above all of her class. "We've got to be ready to make the best of things—of easy things and of difficult things. And we're ready to do it without fuss. Only, it's *your* business to decide: we'll back up, always, anything that you do."

She couldn't, nevertheless, leave New York without a certain measure of regret. It was to be said for Don that he didn't now show any indecent haste. He seemed to be calm—and they even debated as to what ship they were to sail in. He didn't, too, now that there was no longer any question of his having other decisions to make, shrink from going into the details of his fortune. He passed four days in Boston alone, four days that—since she wouldn't for worlds have gone with him—Eleanor

spent in packing and in getting, with Miss Dubosc, her final "impressions."

And it was whilst she was looking, for the last time, at a spot that—because it pushed the eccentricities of the city to the wildest—she liked best, an incident forced her to see that an avalanche was coming that would have forced her to fly if nothing else had. It was precisely the very heart of New York that she liked quite the best ; Broadway as far as the City Hall, except for the trolley lines, was, with its trunk-makers, its tobacco-dealers, its stores and its tourist agencies, so like the Strand that it didn't much thrill her. But at the Post-Office there began what she called the cañons—the tremendous beetling, dark rifts between the skyscrapers, the gloomy gulches with the slow, hindered, jostling crowd. She loved it, as she said to Miss Dubosc, simply because the tremendous, towering masses carried her eyes up to the skies. And she was standing looking up Wall Street. The houses there give the effect of an infinite height—and, tiny between them, at the top of the steep hill that Wall Street is, there was the little spire of Trinity Church that anywhere else would have been a landmark. And men pushed and jostled all round her; a long, disorderly line of children with flags on their shoulders marched down to visit the Washington Memorial Hall; orange peels and banana skins covered the roadway, and the granite stones were torn and furrowed as if a mountain torrent had run down that hill . . .

"I don't care what father may say," she was

saying. "but I'm *sure* it's worth living here to have that to come to look at." Miss Dubosc, with her gay, short-sighted, slim grace suddenly put her umbrella before her face and said:

"There are a dozen fellows sketching us. I suspicioned they were following us all the afternoon."

The avalanche, in fact, had come. It wasn't a minute before, aware that by now they were detected, the journalists closed upon her and asked her what her impressions were. And the cab in which they fled back to their hotel was followed by a procession of other cabs, bearing each two men in Derby hats, with notebooks and pencils. It seemed to stop everything else in the world: and the few remaining hours that Eleanor spent in New York were passed, as it were, cloistrally, in the Marie Antoinette room, with the Fraguard panels. For there were journalists everywhere—in the elevator, in the office, in the Oriental lounge. And when, for the last time, she went to dine with her father in the octagonal dining-room that had the painted brick walls, whilst she herself was saying her grace, and whilst her father was awaiting his soup, standing tall and frock-coated with his hands folded before him, she was aware that three men at the next table were busy with tablets and pencils. It wasn't as blackly unpleasant as she had imagined it might be, but it was sufficiently disturbing to make her whisper to her father, to make her keep her lips closed in the elevator that took them back to their rooms—because a gentleman came running after them and jumped in as it rose—and to make her give up her

idea of going, for the last time, with Miss Dubosc to a roof-garden theatre on Broadway. She had instead to pass an evening alone with the stenographer.

The energy of these servants of the public was, finally, brought home to her by the odd detail that Kirsén—a sedate, sour-faced Scotchwoman, born in Pimlico—received from the reporter of the most enterprising of all New York papers an offer to marry her to a German saloon-keeper if only she'd stay in New York and for four weeks furnish, for the Sunday editions, intricate details of Eleanor's toilettes, temper and the cosmetics that she used. But it was characteristic of Mr Greville's passion, even in New York, for the accurate presentation of facts, that he should spend his last evening in drawing up, for the use of the reporters, an exact statement of how New York had affected him, of how it had affected Eleanor, and how Don. If, he said to Don, when he arrived by the last train from Boston, the public here was actually interested in contemporary history of that sort they might as well have it with a reasonable accuracy. He even persuaded Don—and did so himself—to stand still for four minutes on the road to the elevator in the midst of a little crepitation of pencils.

So that they left the city next morning as it were with the crackle of a million fireworks attached to their tails, but with practically no one save Miss Dubosc to wave to them, from the tiny crowd on the little, rough wharf, a Stars and Stripes. "*Pop Greville carries Collar captive*" was an excellent

headline: "*Kelleg sick at old Man Manhattan!*" was an accurate expression of fact: but "*Eleanor's eyes water,*" with a smaller "*British Maiden sad to leave Flat Iron City*" beneath it, came nearer to a roughly poetic justice. It is true that when, four days out from New York, she discovered that a discreet, pleasant young Harvard man with whom she'd conversed friendly from her deck chair—when she discovered him camera-ing her and Don from a corner as they visited the silent beasts in the dim cattle-decks—and discovered too that he'd positively taken the voyage in order to "report" for the *New York H*——, she was inclined to say that it grew mildly troublesome.

But it is equally true that as, gravely and gradually, they swung out from the little black wharf into the shining stream torn up with its innumerable shuttles she couldn't quite realise that they were leaving New York for good. She certainly couldn't realise it without regret. The flag-waving group—it was tiny indeed by comparison with the thousands that had greeted their arrival—disappeared. From further out she could see alike the immense name of the Pattern King and the smaller, but still vast, black and white announcement of Kelleg's name. It was very clear this time: they could see right up the Palisades and up the Hudson. The tall chimneys sent forth no black smoke, but from the cliffs that grouped themselves above the little green Battery there went up against the grey sky little plumes of white vapour. Tall, vast, grouped together, she couldn't help still regarding them—all those grey,

immense buildings — as a fine expression of a humanity that reaches towards the heavens. And then they “raised” Brooklyn Bridge — high, thin, like a spider’s web: and then the little island with its grim suggestion of railway sheds: and then the clumsy figure in a nightgown, with its torch like a policeman’s stave held in the middle . . .

“But isn’t it,” she said to herself, “all tranquil and peaceful and blessed? . . .” And then she noticed that on the white staff at the stem they carried the British flag.

“Oh, well,” she said—and the echo of a phrase came to her lips: “Little old New York is good enough for me.” And in a sense she really meant it.

Don didn’t want to see his city, he was below in his berth: Mr Greville was forward choosing deck chairs. The ship, in the clearness and silence beyond the final spit of sand, stayed a little to drop the pilot, curtseying in the rolling water. Then, engrossed and formidable, it made its way towards the nothingness of the horizon. Before them, a little to the right, a large Italian liner—British owned—was high out of the water, pouring away over its shoulder a great fillet of grey smoke; behind them another, British too, was overhauling them fast, gay and red and white in the sunlight that waited for them just beyond the Hook. Then the long, grey, whale-like piece of land that had greeted her arrival appeared in the distance and dropped astern. Then she was free.

And Eleanor too was free to pass through the stages and frames of mind that one has to—when one is an Englishwoman—in coming back to England. She had to do it for Don's sake: it was, it seemed to her, her woman's duty. It was a part of the "backing him up" in his actions; it was a part of her loyalty to him. She hadn't, after all, the duty of forming conceptions: she had, as she saw it, only that of making the best of what he gave her.

It is true that her task was rendered singularly easy for her by Don's compatriots: for she couldn't be told that New York trolleys were faster than London trams (she knew they weren't); that American women had the finest complexions in the world (she thought it was a matter of taste); that the American language was the language of Shakespeare; she couldn't be overwhelmed—as she had to be—by the terrific blaze and bang of assertions of people who had never seen land to the eastward of them; she couldn't be out-shouted, out-talked and reduced to a placid silence on these matters for ten days without gently taking up the cudgels. And she took them up, not so much for England as for Europe. She seemed to feel an extraordinary solidarity, a thing that she hadn't ever before known, with Frenchmen, with Italians — even with the Scots.

When the slow vessel was finally surging mud in the Thames she didn't remember to compare the gentle swiftness of the Customs men; she didn't even remember to say that the silent departure in a little steamer from the great boat's side was touching,

dignified and gentlemanly compared with the moaning savage sound that had greeted their arrival in New York.

Nothing, indeed, marked any definite stage of her psychology until they were, all three together, walking up the crowded, dirty High Street that in Gravesend leads from a squalid pier to an incredibly dismal railway station. By that time, in the face of the vastness of the ocean, New York had assumed in her mind an air of littleness—of cleanness, of whiteness, of climbing towards the skies—but above all of tininess. And with its irresponsibility, its crowding, its noises—which did not any more seem to matter much now that she was separated from them by several thousand tranquil minds—it had taken to itself too an air of something pathetic and touching. She wasn't any more, she supposed, ever going to see it again—and it became like a person that one has known well, a frail, small, chattering, fluttering, bright person that has died and that one regrets.

But the High Street of Gravesend, with its steepness, its unpresentable shops, its sooty roofs and its sauntering crowds—and perhaps above all the sight of a yellow, varnished canvas sou'-wester that, hanging outside a shop door in the foreground, seemed to give the note to the whole little picture, drew from her irresistibly the words:

“How picturesque!”

That was it: that was what New York hadn't got: that was what she imagined there wasn't to be found in all the Western continent. It was squalid,

all this, it was crowded—it was, rationally considered, all as evil as you pleased. But in its huddling together of roofs beneath a grey, moist, fresh and gleaming atmosphere—an atmosphere that fused, that didn't reveal details nakedly but shrouded them as beneath a gentle cloak—in all this there was a tenderness, a sort of humility. And when, in the evening, above dirty coal paths, above gleaming lines of rails, at Maidstone, they walked from one junction to another and she saw, above the indistinct mass of blackness, against a liquid, pale rift in the clouds that were folding in for night and rest, the square, black tower, the four attenuated little turrets at the angles, in the intense quiet that the hoot of engines didn't even disturb, she suddenly felt—and it reassured all her misgivings—that this really was her home!

It reassured her in all her misgivings. For she couldn't disguise from herself the fact that she had rather dreaded the home-coming. Suppose, she had said to herself, that she had acquired a "taste" for the clearness, the excitement, the contagious bustle of that other land! Suppose that really that was at bottom what appealed to her! Suppose that it should prove that she simply wasn't able to accompany Don back into the atmosphere of Cathedral closes that, as he saw it, was the best that Europe had to offer! But she could! She could! And that night, as she knelt beside her bed, with all the old emotions coming back to her—with an immense awakening of satisfaction at the fact that she could be interested in the restful gossip that their old, fat,

irritating cook had to tell her in a kitchen that gleamed with tin utensils and shone with its white tables and dressers—it was tears of thankfulness that really filled her eyes. She was going to be able to keep Don!

II

THEY happened to be in the Tottenham Court Road two months later, because they were purchasing furniture for the servants' bedrooms at Cuddiford House. They wouldn't have wanted to furnish the servants' rooms from Tottenham Court Road: they would have liked, both, to give the maids the sort of good, old, really substantial furniture that they had managed to assemble for the rest of the house. But it had taken, they had found, such an extraordinarily long time to fill their own rooms! They had been at it for days and days. They didn't want anything too new or too battered; they didn't want anything that had been restored by furniture-dealers, or anything, on the other hand, that was too expensive. And they had been at it, day in, day out, ever since they had landed. So that if they had had to continue the same search on behalf of the upper rooms they might have had to put off their wedding till Heaven knew when.

They had fixed it between them that they weren't to spend in any one year more than a couple or three thousand pounds. It would be making a sort of game of life—but what more could they do? Don simply hadn't got the imagination of an Aladdin. He not only hadn't the least desire to buy up castles or build marble palaces: he couldn't even begin to

think of how he could throw himself into the frame of mind. And Eleanor, with her shrinking from noticeability, accepted his lack of imagination with a very thankful heart. They simply weren't going, ever, to mention his money. It was left to the stewardship of Augustus—and Augustus was to remain in Boston. His mother, it appeared, was to remain with him.

And everything ran so smoothly. Eleanor didn't even, to her friends, do more than say that she'd liked America pretty well; she didn't want to open sores in front of Don, and Don was always with her. And it is to be said that her task was a very easy one—for no one in Canterbury appeared to her to take the least interest in America. Their absolute, tranquil, immutable want of curiosity even astonished her—for in the United States the United States had seemed to her to be of importance. But there, in the Cathedral city, not a sound of it reached her ears: her father never mentioned it—and Don appeared at last to breathe again. It really seemed, more and more, as if they had only made his excursion into the basement to find a hammer that hadn't been there.

They had come up to town in the last quiet month of the year. She was staying with an aunt in one of the quietest of the London squares. They had bought neat, white, light furniture and neat, white, brass-bound beds, and in the bright, mist-diffused light of the arc lamps they had climbed to the top of a motor 'bus.

"Oh, isn't it," she had said to him as she snuggled

herself against him on the seat, " isn't it heaven to be in Tottenham Court Road again? "

The crowds wandered past on the narrow pavements; the low, yellow, painted house fronts—her eyes had been accustomed to looking so much higher!—seemed wonderfully low and cottage-like. The traffic seemed so quiet: there was no sound of metal, no clash; but they jolted and bumped serenely in the yellow keen air.

" Isn't it heaven? " she repeated. And all the early days of their association came back to her.

The 'bus jolted, bumped, and came to a stop, sideways across the road. The passengers behind them descended; cabs drove out of the way to pass them. They didn't descend: they hadn't any hurry at all. It was even like the old days because, since she was staying with her aunt, when she got home to the square a discreet, heavy hall door would close upon her and Don would have to go away.

Suddenly he struck his fist upon the back of the seat before them.

" I can't do it! " he said. " I *can't* do it! "

And she, in the midst of her happiness, was so ready for disaster that she hadn't any need to ask him what he meant.

" I must go back to America! " he muttered huskily. " I *can't* funk it. I must go back. Even if I can't do what I wanted there are other abuses to remedy. "

At the very back of the empty 'bus top the conductor's figure appeared in the mist. He told them that if they wanted to go on another 'bus was coming. But as they didn't move he once more disappeared.

And the interruption had given Eleanor time to see what she had to do. She had thought it all out before: she had thought it all out on the evening when they had come back from Coney Island. She had seen it coming: she had known it must come. She stood up, moved past him, and then remained looking at him in the passage way.

"Then you know it means good-bye?" she said.

He didn't move: his head was sunken beneath his shoulders: through the misty air from above a lamp shed scintillating rays upon him. She waited for a moment to see if he would speak.

And then the next image that she had of him she had from the pavement. Above the high rail of the 'bus that slewed across the road, with the silhouetted figures of two men in uniform crouched solitarily in the mist above the bonnet, his hat and shoulders, silhouetted too, were black and perfectly motionless. She turned down the side street; she found herself in a square with a circular patch of trees that disappeared, black and silent, into the invisible sky. She walked once round the railings, sobbing aloud, but at the sight of a gentleman who crossed the road, evidently attracted by her solitude, she stayed her tears and walked away southwards.

And positively the only comment she had to suffer from came from Canzano in a letter of astonishing eloquence that she never brought herself to answer. As for her father, he never spoke; he didn't even look at her when she made the announcement to

him. She had somehow a sense that he was saddened; but she couldn't be certain whether he approved of her decision for its promptness or whether he condemned her. He might condemn her for having taken up an enterprise and for having dropped it. But she simply couldn't tell. Augustus remained in Boston, his mother remained with him. They never, either of them, wrote, and she attributed to the silence of one of them a black and malicious glee, and to the other a black and malicious hatred. But there wasn't any doubt about Canzano's disapproval.

"Why did you do it?" he wrote. "Why did you do it? I can imagine two reasons: the one that your ideal is merely to enjoy life: the other that Don—oh, poor Don!—isn't the sort of man to fit in with your scheme of life as it should be lived. You will wish me to dismiss the first reason at once, without a word of comment. You will say that your ideal is not merely to enjoy life. But think about it for a moment. Question your conscience. I admit at once that my poor half-brother is not the sort of man with whom at one's side it would be possible to enjoy life. I will admit that he would have worn you out. . . . But there! Think about this reason for a little while. Perhaps I will return to it.

"Let us then consider the other reason. You think that Don—poor Don!—is not the sort of man to fit in with your scheme of life as it should be lived! You think it was your duty—to your sex, to your class, to your country, to your tradition—

that it was your duty to cast him out. I know you very well: how typically English, how typically cold, how typically good, you are. You consider, you women of your class and race and type, that the first thing in life is to form a standard, a rule of conduct, and then to live up to it. Anything else is a weakness, and you could not face the responsibility of introducing into your family—into your *gens*—a weak man.

“ You have thought—I *know* that you have thought—that Don would wear you out—that he would ‘get on your nerves.’ But no! The phrase is not ‘get on your nerves’—for he *has* gotten on them several times and you have pardoned it. But what you feared was that, all your life, as you would have lived with him, he would have been constantly changing, he would have been constantly making up his mind and then reacting to the very opposite conclusion. And you feared that that would have been too much for you—that you would have ‘developed nerves.’ (That is the right phrase.) You feared that then you might have indulged in recriminations, that then yours wouldn’t have been one of those English families that live always in a sabbatical calm, that run by clockwork everywhere among your fat, green, tranquil hills and valleys. Isn’t that it? You were afraid that you wouldn’t, with Don, be able to keep up to your high standard of life.

“ Well, that is an ideal. I know the English very well because I have spent a year at Oxford and because I have had long talks with you who are the

most English woman in the world. And your ideal—the ideal of all of your good, Tory, English type—is simply that of a life that runs smoothly, decently, quietly—a life in which every man and woman knows exactly his part and has exactly his ideas.

“Do you know what has always struck me as the difference between your countrymen and women and those of any other nation? What particularly is the difference between the Englishman and the American? It doesn’t lie in the clothes, in the hair, in the features, or even so much in the voices. It lies in the eyes. Look at a gallery of portraits of your countrymen and at another of Don’s. Or, better still, look at a few hundred individuals. What will you see? That the Englishman’s eyes are always tranquil: he has formed his ideas: he has had them formed for him: he *knows*: he is never going to learn any more. Look in at the glass at your own fine, brown and beautiful eyes. You will see that look—and the same thing is expressed in every one of your slow, powerful features. It is the strong, placid, powerful gaze of the bull that looks away over the pastures and reflects.

“But with the people here it is so different: they don’t *know*: they haven’t any standards: they don’t know even why they live or what they live for: but they are always alert to meet circumstances, to form new judgments. They would be ashamed if they weren’t. And that gives to their glance its eagerness, its swift shiftings, its want of gentlemanly repose. You will say that Don isn’t an American, that his father was English, and his mother. But

he *is* an American—for Americanism isn't the product of a race: it's a product of a frame of mind. The English who succeed in America are the very English who are stifled at home—who can't stand your atmosphere of accepted ideas. They may have been born in Hampshire but they are born Americans—as American as if the Minute Man's Stone at Lexington had heard their first wail in the night. And Don is the child of such Americans . . .

"You will say that it isn't part of your business in life to marry an American. You will say that that look in the eyes is so much the most precious of the things that Great Britain has evolved that in its interests you have sacrificed even Don. You loved him so much—I know you loved him so much for I have seen how your eyes rested upon him—and you regret: and you are filled with a great sense of loneliness. But you thought it was your duty. . . . Oh, my dear, it wasn't your duty! It wasn't your duty in the great sense. Your duty was to be good, to be kind, to be dear to the noblest and best man you've ever seen. For Don is that!

"Can't you see it! *Can't* you see it! The children of great men—and his father was a great man—are frequently weak: but generally they have qualities that only need a wise nursing to render them very sweet and very fine. Don was weak, if you will. He mightn't have fitted very well into your English life. But hadn't he a strength? Wasn't his craving to get at the best in life an action—wasn't it heroic? Wasn't it now?

"When, by his final reaction, he decided that he

must come back here (he is now devoting all his attention to the study of American politics! He thinks that the secret of American regeneration lies in the getting rid of bribery and is going to devote his millions of income to getting rid of the other millions that are spent in graft)—when he decided that he couldn't 'funk,' that he *must* do his duty to the millions of people that his father had wronged—he *knew*, I say, he knew that you would say to him: 'It means good-bye.' He knew it, and it has broken his heart, and yet he said his words and took the blow in silence. Wasn't that really heroic?

"Couldn't you have made something of such a man? Couldn't you, if you had been older, if you hadn't been so—so English? It *wasn't* necessary for you to come to a determination and to act upon it. It *was not*: it *was not*—and again it *was not*! You, because you are English, you think it is necessary to be cold, to come to some decision in accordance with your character and to act upon it. But again, I say it wasn't!

"And you have come to—I won't say a wrong decision, but to one that wasn't the only one. You've got another plane of thought upon which you could have decided. If Don had been blind, if he'd been crippled, if he'd been merely diseased, wouldn't you have considered it your duty, your privilege, your tender and splendid pleasure to give all your life to nursing him, to waiting upon him? Well then, my dear, Don is a genius. He is a genius, and you who know him better than I do know better than I that that is true. And if you

had looked upon his indecision not as part of his character but as a disease, wouldn't you have considered it your duty—wouldn't you have steeled yourself, and don't you know that you would have been strong enough to nurse him?

"You thought that, living with him, you would have developed nerves! But if you had looked at it in that other way you wouldn't have been afraid. You wouldn't have been afraid for your own strength, for it wasn't his weakness that you feared, *it was your own*. You are cowardly—all you English are cowardly: you are afraid of your own emotions: you are afraid that if you become passionate you will lose dignity. That's why you insist on maintaining your frigid exteriors.

"But you—you, Eleanor Greville—aren't frigid. Only by trying to believe that it is your duty to be frigid you have been horribly cruel. For, because you wished to be true to your race, you couldn't see that you would have been truer still if you had stayed to use your imagination. That! That! That! is your great defect. You are good, you are kind, you are beautiful. You are even splendid, but you chose the easiest course because it was most obvious. But you would, I persist, have been truer to your fine and generous traditions, to your fine and generous self, if you had stayed to see that my dear brother is a noble and a unique invalid whom you might have nursed to health, or to whom you might have splendidly and patiently sacrificed yourself . . .

"Well, I think that if I write any more I shall

cry. It is all finished now. I don't plead with you to change your view. It would be too dangerous for my poor Don. Heaven knows how soon again you might not come to another of those lamentable wrong decisions. Or how late! For you might come to one after you had united yourself to him. I don't plead with you. I am trying to wound you—for, after all, I am an Italian, and deep-seated in me there is the passion for revenge—the lust for the vendetta. And you have stabbed my brother. May God forgive you. And if I have succeeded in making you suffer here on earth may it be a means of leading you to repentance and to a shortening of your hours in Purgatory. For you English, even as we Italians, united as we are in our deep hatred for these people, we are the elder brothers. If they hate us it is because we are intellectually oppressive as elder brothers always are: if we hate them we are committing the sin of hating little children. Don was a child and you have injured him! ”

Eleanor read this letter three times over: she gave it to her father to read and he returned it to her, neatly folded, and with the remark that it was possible to plead even *too* ingeniously for inaccuracy of mind, which was the only thing he had ever, much, reprehended the Americans for. And eventually Eleanor decided not to answer the letter. She could not see that it would do any good.

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